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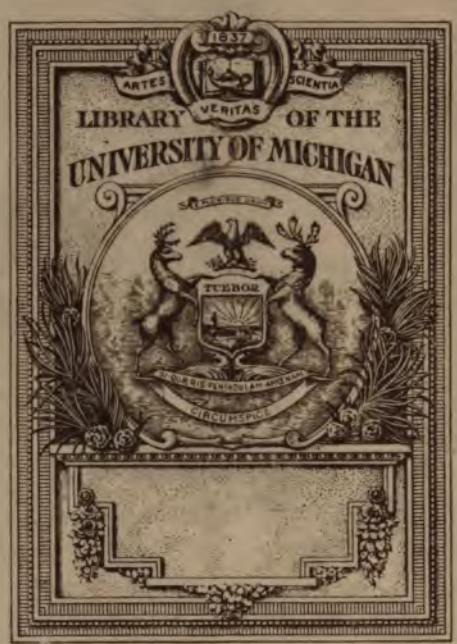
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Summer Number

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THE WAGES OF WAR*

(A play in three acts)

BY J. WIEGAND AND WILHELM SCHARRELMANN

Dedicated to the Friends of Peace

CHARACTERS

Tenants of the basement in center:
MATRENA GRISHEWSKA, an old widow (sixty years).
MARIANUSHKA, her married daughter (thirty years).
IVAN, foreman in factory (twenty-six years). Other sons.
SASHA, printer in newspaper office (twenty-four years).
Tenants of basement to the left:
DMITRI KEKULIN, dismissed clerk, formerly in office of army store (fifty-four years).
NATASHA, his daughter (twenty years).
PETER, his son, newspaper carrier, crippled (twenty-two years).
Tenants of basement to the right:
JACOB SIPJAGIN, laborer in cartridge factory; veteran (fiifty-eight years)
GRISHA, his daughter (nineteen years).
ANDREW, his son, soldier (thirty years).
A sergeant, three soldiers.

SCENE: Petersburgh. TIME: the present.

ACT I

(SCENE: *A basement tenement. Rear, center, stairs and door to street On a level with the street low windows through which one gets a glimpse of th*

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life without. To R. and L. an alcove partitioned off by curtains. To L. front, door to the tenement of the Kekulins. To R. rear, door to tenement of the Sipjagins. On wall to L. Russian stove surrounded by bench. In center of stage a table: to L. and R. of table a bench. On wall to R. a cupboard.)

Scene I

MATRENA GRISHEWSKA, DMITRI KEKULIN

Matrena (*bent with age, delicate; face bearing traces of grief and privation. Stands before table, silently staring on icon which she holds in her hand, half wrapped in apron. Mumbles, nodding her head*).— Dear Lord, is it sin? Oh, the misery of having to take the Savior's image to the pawnshop. The last treasure of the house — Father in heaven, forgive me!

Dmitri Kekulin (*stumbles down the stairs, drunk*).

Matrena (*covers the icon with her apron*).— Sh — Dmitri. Don't wake Anushka. Where are you coming from so early?

Kekulin (*staggering about, grotesque in his good-natured humor*).— Sh — Dmitri — I know. Don't you ever open your mouth, Dmitri. Then you are a good fellow, he?

Matrena.— Sh, sh. Anushka needs sleep.

Kekulin.— Let her sleep, my dear. In sleep one forgets this wretched life.

Matrena.— But, father Dmitri — you are not home from work at this hour?

Kekulin.— Work — work — no more work. Work is nonsense, unless you work your own pockets full. They do it at the stores. Those rascals. He, Kekulin, what business had you to say anything when they steal like magpies? Is it your business if they make soles out of pasteboard? Are you going to wear those boots, Kekulin? But your Ivan and your Sasha, mother Grishewska, they must wear them when they go to war. They can wade through the snow barefoot, eh?

Matrena (*quietly*).— You have been drinking, father Kekulin. What has happened?

Kekulin (*with comical good humor*).— They have snubbed me. They have thrown me out. "Father Polyakin," said I to the director, "you should not send pasteboard boots to the army, and cartridges without powder, and cloaks without collars. The soldiers are our brothers, so to say." "Dmitri Kekulin," said he, "lazy lout, sneak, how do you know what I

send?" "I took note of it." "You are dismissed, miserable sot." Ha, ha, yes, that's what he said — dismissed, mother Grishewska.

Matrena.— So you are out of work, father Dmitri? What is to become of you? You have two children. Oh, what is to become of all of us! The men in war, the women starving, the factories closed, and bread so dear.

Kekulin.— And the rascals stealing. And therefore I said — Father Polyakin, said I ——

Matrena.— But where is this to end? All that army of unemployed paupers. Father Dmitri, my Marianushka came a little while ago. You know her husband is in the army. Mother, said she, weeping, if you don't want me to starve, let me stay with you. The owner has levied on my toy shop. Should I send her out on the street? Her husband is in war, and soon she will have a child. If we did not have Sasha — he still earns something. Ivan's factory is closed. But Sasha cannot furnish bread for all of us. Father Dmitri, I must take the Savior's image to the pawnshop (*wraps the icon in her apron and presses it to her bosom*). Oh, the wretchedness of it all ——

Kekulin.— It is beautiful, beautiful, I say, this misery. And it must become still greater. Until the string snaps. I gave it to them, Father Polyakin, said I ——

Matrena.— You have been foolish. As long as one has something to eat, one ought to be quiet, see nothing. (*Going towards the street door.*) Don't be so noisy, father Dmitri. I must go now. Don't wake Anushka.

Scene II

Dmitri Kekulin (*stares after* Matrena. *At first still under the influence of liquor, he gradually talks himself into a good-natured anger*).— Yes, yes, it is all right, Matrena. To be quiet, blind, and deaf, to know nothing. Always — Don't say a word. Close your eyes and shut your mouth. No! Won't do any more. I will tear open my eyes wide (*stands astride and stares with wide open eyes. Then looks around the room*). Then I shall see everything. Stolen army boots and stolen army cloaks. Big and little thieves. And the biggest thief of all Pan Di-rec-tor Pol-ya-kin (*with clenched fists*). I shall go to the Newsky Prospect and stand up in the square and shout: Polyakin is a thief. A low thief. He has sent eight wagonloads of pasteboard boots to our freezing soldiers. Pasteboard boots. Oh, oh — And then the people will stop and say: What? A thief, Polyakin has been stealing? Give it to him, thrash him (*he rubs his hands in glee*). And then you will get it, Polyakin. Polyakin, come, for I want to talk with you (*places a chair in front of him*). Polyakin, that's you, and here am I,

Dmitri Kekulin. Polyakin, you drink, Polyakin, you are a lazy lout. Polyakin, you lie, cheat, and steal. Polyakin, you are a miserable villain. (*Grabs a footstool and throws it against the back of the chair.*) Thus will I speak with you, Pan Di-rec-tor Pol-ya-kin.

Scene III

DMITRI KEKULIN, MARIANUSHKA, GRISHA.

Marianushka (*awakened by the noise pokes her head through the curtains, unspeakable terror in her black eyes*).— Father Dmitri, what is the matter?

Kekulin (*grinding with embarrassment*). I have only given Pan Direc-tor Pol-ya-kin a slap in the face.

Grisha (*from right; delicate, pretty*).— Are you two fighting?

Kekulin.— No, my dove. I don't even think of fighting.

Grisha.— But it sounded so. The chair on the floor (*running up to* MARIANUSHKA, *who steps from the alcove*). Dear Anushka, you have been sleeping and he disturbed you? Shame on you, Dmitri.

Kekulin.— No, no, I should be ashamed. I, who gave Pan Director Polyakin a slap, so he calls, Dmitri, spare my life?

Marianushka (*wearily sits down on the bench by the stove*).— How dark and dreary it is in here, how close. I am chilly.

Grisha.— Come, lean against the stove. I will stir the fire.

Kekulin.— That's the way of you women. Yes, yes, that's your way. You know that things must change. And after the state has been cured of its ills, then you think nothing of it (*goes to left*). I am hungry and thirsty. Is Matasha there, the little dove (*looks into the room to left*). Dark and cold. Taken flight. Must see what Possilowitsch is doing (*goes up the stairs*).

Marianushka.— Dmitri, don't drink so much. You already owe Possilowitsch.

Kekulin (*at the door*).— Nitschewo. Won't hurt Anuskha. When we have overturned the state, when I am at the top and Possilowitsch at the bottom. That's so, Anushka, that's so. (*Exit. The darkness grows. Through the window comes the light of a gas lantern. The fire in the stove flares up.*)

Marianushka.— Oh, drink, drink, cursed drink! (*Sighs.*)

Grisha.— It is a curse. (*Both are silent. Some people hurry past on the street.*)

Grisha.— Oh, dear, there they are already. Oh, no, not they.

Marianushka.— Ivan and Sasha? Oh, you may have to wait long for them. They have to step up one by one. Then they are measured, weighed, examined, turned and turned around like — like —cattle chosen for slaughter.

Grisha.— Marianushka, don't say that.

Marianushka.— Grisha, I have seen how they were dumped into the railroad cars when they wanted to turn back to look at their wives. I could not even shake hands with Petrushka.

Grisha.— They were pushed and knocked about, were they?

Marianushka.— Yes, with the butt of the muskets. And the music struck up a tune and the drums were beating so we could not hear their wails and the last word they called to us.

Grisha.— That should not be.

Marianushka.— And when they have entered those cars and the trains start, then they are gone. Grisha, they never return. Never. They are all shot, every man. Oh, Petrushka! I have seen him die, Grisha. He will not return (*breaks into sobs*). Do you believe in dreams, Grisha? (*Grisha silently shakes her head.*) I have had such bad dreams. I believe in them. I have seen him die.

Grisha (*falls upon her knees before her*).— You saw him die — Petrushka?

Marianushka.— I saw him lie on the snow. The blood was such a bright red on the white snow. In his stiff hands he held the little silver cross which I gave to him the last night.

Grisha.— Oh, stop, I cannot bear this, Marianushka.

Marianushka.— I firmly believe that he is dead now. Why did they have to take him from me? He did no harm to any one. I am going to claim him from him who sends them all to bitter death. They take all. One after another. And to-day it is the turn of Ivan and Sasha.

Grisha.— And Sasha? No, not Sasha?

Marianushka.— Why not Sasha? Why not him? Because you love him, unhappy girl?

Grisha.— Marianushka!

Marianushka (*sighing deeply*).— That is the worst of it, they kill our men and kill us with them. You are so young. Be wise.

Grisha (*weeping*).— Anushka!

Marianushka.— It is so, depend upon it. They all have their turn.

Grisha.— I will pray for him, I will also pray for Petrushka.

Marianushka.— Whether you pray or not, they will take him from you, as they have taken mine from me.

Grisha.— But he may come back, your Petrushka.

Marianushka.— He will never come, he will never see his child (*weeping*). It will stretch out its little arms in vain and call its father.

Grisha.— Oh, no, no, no. God will not suffer such wrong.

Marianushka.— God? Grisha, if things were going God's way there would never be such a thing as war.

Grisha.— Sasha must not go — he must not.

Marianushka.— You are both young, and — you are still innocent. (*In an undertone*) When love has blessed you (*with a hard voice*) —then you will know what misfortune is. Not before.

Scene IV

Marianushka, Grisha, Peter, Matrena

Peter (*enters from street, quiet, depressed*).— Everything still in the dark? (*Approaches the two women.*) There you sit and say not a word? You have really scared me.

Marianushka (*bitter*).— No reason to be afraid of us. You must have a bad conscience, Peter?

Peter (*heaves a deep sigh*).— I am so sad ——

Marianushka.— Who is not sad at such times? If you men begin to complain, what shall we say? What is your trouble?

Peter.— My paper, too, has been stopped to-night. No chance to earn another kopek.

Marianushka.— The same old story. Why was it done?

Peter (*shrugging his shoulders*).— I suppose the war news are not to become known to the people.

Marianushka.— Yes, you are no longer trusted.

Peter (*bitter*).— Great victory of our armies, five kopeks!

Marianushka.— And three days later: The truth about the last battle — five kopeks!

Peter.— Yes, yes (*sighs*). Grisha, you too are sad?

Grisha.— Let me alone.

Peter.— Oh. (*Goes to left despondently.*)

Marianushka.— Yes, yes — does he know his father is out of work since to-day?

Grisha (*staring before her*).— I don't know (*suddenly jumping up*) and I say no, he shall not go. They will have to drag me along, I won't let him.

Marianushka (*smiling sorrowfully*).— Oh, don't delude yourself. He will be shot on the spot if he refuses to go.

Grisha (*horrified*).— Is that what they do?

Scene V

Marianushka, Grisha, Matrena

Marianushka (*jestingly*).— Mother dear, we thought that you had eloped!

Matrena (*mumbling*).— One ruble and thirty kopeks.

Marianushka (*with scornful laugh*).— One ruble and thirty kopeks?

Matrena.— For the beautiful icon! My father had given it to me and I held it sacred all these many years. Now it is gone. For one ruble and thirty kopeks. (*Looks at the money in her hand.*) But why are you still in the dark?

Marianushka.— We were chattering, mother dear, of this thing and another (*lights a candle*).

Matrena.— And the boys? Are they not back yet?

Marianushka.— Perhaps they kept them right away.

Matrena.— Kept them?

Grisha.— No, that is impossible (*almost simultaneously*)!

Marianushka.— Well, I only thought so.

Matrena.— Are you in earnest, Marianushka?

Marianushka.— Yes — I can't explain it any other way. Though they should have allowed them to take leave.

Grisha.— But you don't even know whether they have been accepted. Perhaps they are both unfit.

Marianushka.— Don't you believe that.

Matrena.— But they will surely let them bid their old mother good by? I want to give them my blessing, as I gave it to Petrushka.

Marianushka.— It will help them too.

Grisha.— They will soon come, mother Matrena. You can depend upon it.

Matrena.— It is time to prepare supper. They will be hungry when they come.

Grisha (*calling into room to left*). —Peterkin, Peterkin, come here.

Peter.— Grisha. What is it?

Scene VI

GRISHA, MARIANUSHKA, MATRENA, PETER, IVAN, SASHA

Grisha (*trembling with excitement*).— There they are — they are coming! Anushka, I have not the heart to ask them.

Marianushka.— You need not ask — look at their faces.

Matrena (*stammering*).— My children — my dear children ——

Ivan (*big, wild-eyed, with grim irony*).— Good evening, mother. Good evening, all. Two newly appointed champions of the fatherland. To-morrow they will be dumped into a train and shipped to Siberia. Well, what's the use of howling about it? When you are out of work you might as well serve as target for cannons,— it amounts to the same thing at the end. Well, mother, what do you think of it?

Matrena.— They will send you to the front? You, Ivan, and Sasha, also?

Marianushka (*with a laugh of despair*).— Did I not tell you so? They will all have their turn.

Grisha (*takes the hand of* SASHA *who has been silent*).— Sasha, I won't leave you, Sasha, speak — but one word. They dare not force you. They dare not send you to die. Why should they choose you — you?

Marianushka.— Why any one? Has any one of them done harm to another? Are not people tormenting one another enough as it is?

Ivan.— It is laughable. No, it is maddening. What have I to do with the enemy? Has the enemy done something to me, to you? I could have laughed into their faces, the doctor, the general, the colonel, and whoever they were, when the one at the table said with his snarling voice, Ivan Grishewski. Accepted. Present himself to-morrow. Ha, ha, what for? To kill people?

Marianushka (*horrorstricken*).— To die, Ivan! To fertilize the earth with your blood — Out there in the world — beyond Siberia ——

Matrena.— Sasha, my son, you are silent, you say not a word. My boy, my boy!

Sasha (*quietly*).— Poor mother!

Grisha.— Sasha, they shall not kill you. I am going to pray for you. I would do something to save you. Tell me, are you afraid? Do not fear that you will not return?

Sasha (*sadly*).— Grisha, and what if they do kill me, what is there about it? But that I shall kill — I — (*visionary*). Before us lie the ranks of the enemy. You rush upon them. They stare at you in terror. Their

very eyes seem to cry out, Mercy! have mercy! I — I too have a mother, a — Grisha! And you pierce them with the sharp cold bayonet, pierce their breast, and they break down — and you keep on striking them down, murdering, murdering (*terrified*). I will not, I could not forget it, that I had taken men's lives. Life is sacred — and all have a mother and a sister who are without bread, who innocently fall victims to war.

Matrena.— My child!

Grisha.— O Sasha!

Ivan (*to* SASHA).— Talk on, clench your fists (*laughing*), why you can't even do that! Go and pray to your God. That is all you can do; He will help you.

Sasha (*quietly*).— Dear brother, God does not want war. God is good. God means that you should not do unto another as you would not be done by.

Grisha.— Yes, God wants men to love one another. Sasha, I will die for you. They shall drag me with you. They shall kill me.

Sasha (*overwhelmed with emotion*). — Grisha, and you mother, you two — Grisha, you feel it that I must love all my fellow-men. I cannot hate — how can I kill?

Marianushka.— Dreamer.

Ivan.— Visionary. Of what use is your refusal? Take the gun into your hand and tell them: You have made us paupers. Why? Because you who make war think only of yourself. What do you care about us? We are the fertilizer used to fatten the soil for you. We get the gold and silver from the mines for you. We drudge for you in the factories. We kill your enemies. What for? So you can revel in luxury. You — the few. But we are tired of it. We shall turn our muskets and our sabres against you.

Marianushka.— How ridiculous you are, Ivan! You would not dare to utter a sound. You will meekly submit and say not a word when tomorrow comes.

Ivan (*laughingly*).— Well, would it be of any use? I shall fight like — like (*furiously*) — they will have to suffer for it, those enemies! I'll beat them into a jelly ——

Marianushka.— Well, there you are. You'll make a good soldier! 'Twas only your first impulse that made you revolt. But that's over. And you, Sasha? Will you suffer them to take from us our husbands, to rob our children of their fathers? Oh, that we should be born only to usher into the world new creatures of misery ——

Sasha (*struggling with himself*).— I — I — I will quietly tell them what I think ——

Grisha.— You will tell them that God does not want us to take another's life. That we should love our neighbor. Love all — all ——

Scene VII

The preceding. Dmitri Kekulin

Kekulin (*enters staggering*).— Ha, ha, ha — Ha, ha — Matrena, do you know what Stepan Possilowitsch said to me? "You are a capital fellow, Dmitri Kekulin. Did you give it to Pan Director Polyakin? Did you tell him what you thought of him? You are a capital joker, Dmitri Kekulin." No, he did not say joker, capital fellow, said he. Ha, ha, Ivan — Sasha — Ha, ha — yep — do you know, to-morrow you get a pair of pasteboard boots and cloaks with the collars stolen. You can wrap up in them — when the snow comes and the rain ——

Matrena.— Be quiet, Dmitri. You are drunk. Ivan, Sasha, you must be hungry. You must eat. Here is fresh bread — butter — bacon.

Kekulin.— Did you pawn your icon, old woman? Ha, ha, did the Savior give you bread for it? Ivan, do you know what I said to Polyakin? You are a heavy fellow, Polyakin, said I.

Sasha (*pale, grieved*).— Mother, did you pawn the sacred image? Mother, you did it for a few crusts of bread?

Matrena (*helpless*).— Do you want to eat, Sasha? Do you want your supper, Ivan?

Sasha.— Mother, can I eat with the tears that I would weep?

Kekulin.— Yes, Ivan, Pan Director, said I, I am going to quit. You are a villain, said I — I cannot respect you, I, Dmitri Kekulin.

Grisha (*angrily*).— Be silent — Don't you see that we feel as if our hearts would break?

Scene VIII

The preceding. Natasha. *Later* Sipjagin

Natasha (*pretty, bold, enters during* Kekulin's *last speech*).— Well, father — you have a nice jag.

Kekulin.— Sure I have. Held up a light to Pan Polyakin, Di-rec-tor Pol-ya-kin. Where have you been, my dove?

Matrena.— You have not been around all day, Natasha.

Natasha (*pertly*).— Been loafing. What use could I do? I've been in the city. It was great. Ha, ha, even my hat was smashed. I got into a crowd. Workingmen and soldiers were fighting. There were some dead. Brrrr! Blood was flowing in the street. What of it. I'll buy me a new hat (*laughs*). But gracious, what long faces you are making. Why can't you be jolly? Life is short. Do you know what I have? (*Tinkles some coins.*) Rubles, bright rubles.

Kekulin.— Your old father needs them.

Ivan (*rising*).— Natasha, where did you get them?

Natasha (*laughing*).— Stole them.

Ivan.— You lie.

Natasha (*laughing*).— Peter, come here. Get some whiskey (*pulls* IVAN'S *hair*). You can't live without it, mad Ivan. (*Caressingly*) Peterkin, Peterkin!

Peter (*curtly*).— I won't, I won't get whiskey.

Kekulin.— What, Peter — you dare to refuse? Won't go for whiskey? I'll teach you to hurry, Peterkin.

Peter (*takes the money*).— You are a bad girl, Natasha. Don't you see what is the matter with Sasha and Ivan? (*Exit depressed.*)

Natasha.— That's so. Gracious, I had forgotten. So they have taken you? That's splendid, Ivan! I wonder how you look in a uniform. (*Sings while she puts her arms about his neck.*)

My sweetheart is a trooper,
Ho, ho!
In uniform with braid of gold,
Ho, ho!

Ivan (*angrily*).— Natasha, stop singing. Aren't you sorry that I am going? You seem glad? Probably you will soon have another in my place? And to such a girl one loses his heart!

Natasha (*laughing*).— Why did you do it? You must have had some reason? (*Changing her mood: alluringly.*) And yet I love you, you wild man. Just look at Grisha, how jealous she is!

Marianushka (*threatening*).— Leave that girl alone, you.

Grisha.— Let her say what she wants, I don't care.

Natasha.— Wait, you black witch!

Kekulin (*seeing* PETER *bring the whiskey*).— O darling Peterkin, darling Peterkin, give me the bottle. There it is best taken care of. (*They have placed glasses on the table.*)

Natasha (*goading them on*).— Drink, Ivan. Be merry. Be, jolly all of you. It's the last evening. Let's celebrate.

Matrena.— Oh, children, my children. My heart is so heavy, I could weep — weep.

Natasha.— Pah, weep! Let's laugh and drink (*sings*).

Fill again, fill the glass,
Drown your care and sorrow,
Life is short, let it pass,
Think not of to-morrow.

Ivan (*wildly*).— Do away with it, get rid of life. Come what may — I don't care! Mother dear, don't grieve. Nothing lost. Besides — not all bullets hit the mark. Your health, Dmitri, old wreck! (*Keeps on drinking.*)

Natasha.— Sasha, my dear, won't you drink?

Grisha.— Sasha, don't drink, please.

Natasha (*sings*).—

A glass with liquor, sparkling green,
Hurrah,
What tastes as sweet, has brighter sheen,
And makes the heart as gay?

Sasha (*seizes the glass and hurls it to the floor*).— Miserable stuff! (*Rests his head on his hand.*)

Matrena (*caressing his hand*).— Oh, child, child! What is it you are planning?

Kekulin (*steps up to* SASHA).— Jolly, Sasha, ha, ha! Do as I did with Pan Polyakin. Polyakin, old fellow, said I, I quit. I don't care to witness any longer your stealing and your cheating. Go to the devil.

Ivan.— Your health, Polyakin, Pan Polyakin — your health!

Kekulin (*grinning and mocking the director*).— Thank you, Pan Polyakin. Go to the devil — you are dismissed.

SCENE IX

The preceding. SIPJAGIN

SIPJAGIN *enters: wooden leg, martial mien*

Sipjagin.— Well, it seems you are jolly here to-night. What's that, Ivan?

Grisha.— Father, are you coming from the factory? Are you tired and hungry? I'll quickly get something for you to eat.

Ivan.— Celebrating a parting feast, father Jacob. To-morrow we are going to the front. Food for cannons.

Sipjagin (*enters*).— Ahem, so, so. Well, well. (*Strokes his mustache.*) Well, there must be soldiers. I have been one. And so is my Andrew.

Marianushka.— And you returned a cripple!

Sipjagin.— Why, yes, I was at Plevna, in the year '79. Boys, I tell you, those cannons howled, too.

Marianushka (*with grim irony*).— And where did you leave your leg, Sipjagin?

Sipjagin.— Well, if you want to hear that story — just as I started to cut one of those Turks across the ears with my sabre, a bomb from the fort struck him. His own brothers did it, and I never saw him again — nor my leg. That's so. It is not exactly pleasant. But there must be soldiers, I suppose.

Sasha (*rising*).— Why must there be soldiers, father Jacob? What if they all said, we won't? What would happen to them? Would there still be war? If no one is willing to be a soldier, will there be war?

Sipjagin.— Well, well, you see nobody does that. It would be nonsense (*drinks*). Let us drink to a happy reunion.

Marianushka (*ferociously*).— A reunion? Why, won't they come back?

Sipjagin.— Don't be foolish. It may be bad enough out there, but at the end you boys will come out of it all as victors, just as we did. (*Sings.*)

On the battlefield of Plevna,
  Where we gave the Turks a beating,
With a thousand cannon and three —
  Till we saw them all retreating,
Boys I tell you, golly — gee!
  That's what I call victory!

Sasha (*interrupts him brusquely*).— No, no! I won't go along. I won't. One must make the beginning.

Kekulin.— That's right, one must tell them. So did I, Polyakin, said I — villain ——

Ivan.— Shut up, you old ape, with your everlasting Polyakin.

Sasha.— Mother, I said I won't go — let me alone. They can drag me out of here, but I shall not go willingly.

Matrena.— Sasha, my Sasha, you will make all of us unhappy.

Sasha.— Are we not unhappy already, mother? Can things be worse than they are? What can they do to you if I refuse?

Marianushka.— Right you are. Let them do to us whatever they want.

Grisha.— Sasha, Sasha!

Natasha (*to* IVAN).— How she loves him, the little dove? (*Laughs.*)

Kekulin.— That is what I say. Children, it is the best thing to do.

Ivan (*furiously*).— What is the best thing? You were saying nothing, old hogshead.

Matrena (*to* SASHA).— Son, my son, in the name of our Savior, don't do that. See, Petrushka has gone too, and Andrew and the rest.

Marianushka.— Sonja won't return — Petrushka and Andrew won't come back alive. So it is all the same, whether one is shot here or there.

Peter (*softly to* IVAN *and* NATASHA).— Petrushka — (*breathless*) Petrushka — is — (*whispers*).

Ivan (*aloud*).— You lie!

Peter.— I heard it. At Possilowitsch's place I heard it.

Marianushka.— What is it you are whispering there?

Peter.— We? Nothing, Marianushka.

Sasha.— Yes, Marianushka, you are right. I shall refuse. I cannot see a beast suffer and shall I shoot down cold-bloodedly men whom I don't know? The sons of mothers? The fathers of children? I cannot do it. I *will* not.

Matrena (*to* NATASHA, *who has whispered to her like one petrified with terror*).— What is it you say, Natasha? Petrushka is — really — Oh, oh, oh ——

Sipjagin.— I must say when we were young we looked upon it differently. We were not such cowards. At Plevna ——

Sasha (*starting*).— Cowards, cowards — you say? (*Wants to rush upon* SIPJAGIN, *but controls his temper.*) Pardon me, father Jacob, but I won't be called a coward. Grisha, come, don't cry.

Grisha.— O Sasha, Sasha ——

Ivan.— It is useless, brother. If *all* did the same and threw away their muskets and said: If you can't agree why don't you fight it out? We don't care to be your cat's paws.

Sasha.— The time will come, Ivan, when all will feel so. But one must make the beginning.

Sipjagin.— Sasha, don't talk nonsense. Think of the fate of the fatherland.

Marianushka.— Fatherland? Fatherland? What is that drivel about

fatherland? What is that, anyway? What do you call fatherland? The country that kills our fathers? I tell you if my child should see the light of this world, I will teach it to call father! Before the palaces where they live that have sent out its father, it shall stand and call, *Give me back my father. You have broken my mother's heart. Curse upon you!*

Matrena.— Marianushka, Marianushka, you are beside yourself.

Marianushka (*collapses upon the bench and lays her head upon the table*).

Matrena.— Oh — Oh — if she knew — if she knew ——

Marianushka (*looking up*).— If I knew what, mother?

Matrena (*weeping*).— Oh, nothing — oh, nothing.

Ivan (*whispering*).— Why can't you keep quiet, mother.

Marianushka (*slowly*).— Mother, what has happened to Petrushka? (*Pause.*)

Matrena. — Ask — Ask Peter.

Peter (*fearfully*).— I don't know. I know nothing, I said nothing.

Marianushka (*with a loud and hard voice*).— What has happened to Petrushka?

Ivan.— You fool, why did you have to talk?

Peter.— I am not a fool.

Marianushka (*stands before him*).— Speak — speak.

Peter (*with a sudden obstinate resolve*).— It's in the paper. Possilowitsch had the paper.

Marianushka.— What is in the paper?

Peter.— There it is — read yourself.

Marianushka (*takes the paper*).— In the paper? (*With sudden humiliation.*) Who — who will read to me what the paper says? (*She goes from one to the other*). You? You? No one? You read it for me. Please, please do!

Kekulin (*who alone has continued to drink*). — Be merry, children. Polyakin got his share all right.

Marianushka (*to* SIPJAGIN).— You! You can read. Oh, I beg you, father Jacob.

Sipjagin (*takes the paper. Silence.*)

Peter (*who steps up and points to a place in the paper*).— There it is.

Sipjagin (*reads*).— Yes, by all the saints! (*Stops.*)

Marianushka.— Read! Read!

Sipjagin.— Petrushka Koljakow — Department Petersburg — Third Brigade of Sharpshooters — Eleventh Company. Shot in the abdomen — dead.

Marianushka (*softly; pale; absently*).— I knew it. I knew it — no, no, no — it cannot be. Father Jacob, that is a mistake.

Sipjagin (*moved*).— Oh, yes, it is here.

Marianushka (*with an outcry*).— Dead — that cannot be true — not that word. You make a mistake. You read a wrong line. You did not see right, father Jacob.

Sipjagin.— Yes, yes, Marianushka, he is dead.

Matrena (*helpless, broken*).— Oh, oh — oh ——

Marianushka.— No, no, no — I — what am I doing — I want to go to him. I must. He is suffering — he calls me, Marianushka, Marianushka, and I am not there! (*All are silent.*)

Grisha (*weeping aloud*).— Marianushka!

Marianushka.— Oh, could I but weep — but no, I don't want to. I want to claim him from those who send him to his death! (*Weeps.*)

Sasha.— Sister, sister!

Marianushka.— To-morrow — to-morrow, Sasha. To-morrow! (*Falls in a faint.*)

Sasha (*wildly*).— What is it? Anushka! I swear to you, I shall not present myself to-morrow. They may come, they may get me by force!

Kekulin (*heavily intoxicated*).— How many fell, Jaschka? A whole company?

Sipjagin.— Three thousand five hundred and fifty-eight men. (*Still holds the paper before him.*)

Kekulin (*while the others are silent with awe*).— Well, that's the way. (*Staggers to the front and sings.*)

'Tis good before the guns to stand,
For ere you are aware,
In a wink of eye, with a move of hand —
You are dead and rid of care!

(*During the singing — Curtain*)

ACT II

(*The afternoon of the following day. Bright sunshine upon the street. A sultry, expectant atmosphere in the basement.*)

SCENE I

GRISHA, MATRENA, SASHA

Sasha (*in a corner of the bench at the stove, his head in his hands*).

Matrena (*standing wearily at the table; trembles as she listens to sounds*

without).— Do you hear? Grisha, don't you hear it? The steps of soldiers. They are coming, Sasha.

Grisha (*frightened; goes to the stairs*).— Do you hear them, mother Matrena? You must be mistaken.

Matrena.— No, no — listen. They come to get Sasha.

Grisha.— No, mother, you are mistaken. It is workingmen that are passing on the sidewalk. These are no soldiers.

Matrena (*staring like one paralyzed with despair*).— Yes, and even if I were mistaken this time, still they will come. Surely they will come. I wonder what they said at the barracks to-day when his name was called and Ivan had to tell them: " My brother did not come. He refuses to go to war." How they must have treated Ivan. " So that's the kind you are, you and your nice brother? " (*Helplessly going toward* SASHA.) Child — don't — don't sit at that stove so silently. Speak. Perhaps it is still time to go. Yes, go. They will forgive you for not having been prompt. You don't want to bring misfortune to your mother and your brother and sister!

Grisha (*trembling*).— Mother Matrena, let him alone. Respect his feelings. Can't you feel that he cannot act otherwise! He — and he shan't, either! (*Tenderly.*) Sasha, my good boy! (*Embraces* MATRENA.) Don't you love him? If you do, mother Matrena, don't torture him with your talk.

Matrena.— Grisha, I love him more dearly than my other children. He always was so good and quiet, that boy, far better a child than Ivan or Anushka. I often wished he could get an education. For him I could have drudged, given my very blood. And now he is to be the cause of the misfortune of us all. (*Caresses his hair.*) Sasha — child ——

Sasha (*puts his arms about her and throws back his head*).— Mother! — I know that you have slaved your life long, that you have known nothing but cares and sorrows. You have had everything to bear. I want to work for you, want to drudge and starve, I want to ease your life. But to become a soldier and go to the war — never. And now, say nothing more about it. (*Sits down.*) Come what may, I alone shall bear the guilt.

Grisha.— Sasha, those who want to get you, theirs is the guilt. Let them come.

Matrena (*helpless, tired*).— Oh, God! Child — don't encourage him

Grisha.— Do I, mother Matrena?

Matrena.— Your brother, too, has gone.

Grisha.— Yes, Andrew went — and that is bad enough. Shall I give up Sasha, too?

Matrena.— Kekulin stays away so long. He wanted to return promptly after having taken Ivan to the barracks. If Ivan had not gone either!

(*Trembling.*) Sasha, hide, escape, until to-morrow. I know where they will not find you — hide, Sasha.

Sasha (*quietly*).— Don't expect me to do that, mother.

Matrena.— Oh, my child, my child.

Grisha.— Mother Matrena, perhaps father Dmitri is in the tavern?

Matrena.— What do you mean — in the tavern? Over at Possilowitsch? Spending his last money in drink? Ruining himself by drink because he is out of work! I shall get him. I want to know whether Ivan did present himself and what the soldiers said. (*Staggering out wearily.*)

Grisha.— Mother Matrena, shall I go too?

Matrena.— No, no. Thank you. He will not listen to you.

Scene II

Sasha, Grisha

Grisha (*stands still; fearfully*).— Sasha? (*After a pause, tenderly.*) Sasha, see how brightly the sun shines. It sheds a glow even into this basement, Sasha, don't you see it? It is spring outside (*timidly*). Spring! spring! You feel it in the air. It is so strangely soft.

Sasha.— Spring!

Grisha.— Spring is so beautiful. The buds open, the trees get green. Everybody feels cheered, Sasha, it is almost as beautiful as loving somebody. (*Comes up to him*) Sasha, I love you — Oh, how I love you ——

Sasha.— Poor Grisha.

Grisha (*on her knees, opening her arms to him*).— Rich, happy Grisha!

Sasha (*deeply moved*).— Grisha, could I do otherwise — but I can't!

Grisha.— You — neither shall you. Just as you are, I love you — love you so dearly, I cannot tell you how dearly. Can it be told at all, Sasha? One would like to do something to show it and yet one can't.

Sasha (*very quietly*).— You need not. I know it. I have known it as long as I can think. Grisha, do you remember when you gave me the first kiss?

Grisha.— I know, yes. Bad boys on the street had been abusing you. You had done nothing to them. And you allowed them to beat you and only looked at them so sadly. Then they went away using bad language. And then I kissed you. You were much stronger than they.

Sasha.— You are so young, you are so beautiful. You have such large, deep brown eyes. (*Tortured.*) Could I do otherwise for you, Grisha, I might do it.

Grisha.— But you shall not — you shall defy them. I want it. Let them say whatever they want.

Sasha.— Dear Grisha ——

Grisha.— Darling — darling ——

Sasha (*quietly*).— Grisha, once I read a story that I was setting up in the printing shop. I could not get the types quickly enough, so beautiful and so sad was that story. Think of it; a man and a woman are in prison. They are to be executed. They love each other and they are to die.

Grisha (*overwhelmed*).— Like us, like us, Sasha. I want to die with you. Oh, what is death, as long as you love each other.

Sasha.— Do you know what crime those two had committed? They had only said we believe in God and Jesus Christ. That they were not allowed to say.

Grisha.— But to-day all say it.

Sasha.— To-day they torture him who no longer can believe it, because he doubts divine justice. (*Trembling.*) Do you know how those two died? They clasped hands. Their arms about each other they stood at the stake and smiled, when the flames reached up to them. " Do you love me," he asked, " do I cause you pain? " " No," said she, smiling, " I know that you are right."

Grisha (*exultingly*).— And you are right. You are right. So we want to die! (*She involuntarily takes hold of his hand.*)

Sasha (*with a sad smile*).— Do you love me, do I cause you pain?

Grisha.— My beloved! I laugh. I laugh, for you are right.

Sasha.— Grisha, dear Grisha! Believe me; the time will come when they will all say: " We shall kill no more. We want peace, we want to work. And we want to be good to all people. We won't have any one live like a dog. We won't have people wail with hunger because they have not even as much to eat as a beast." (*With visionary ardor.*) It will come, Grisha, that beautiful time. But one must make the beginning. Then the others follow, all, all.

Grisha (*enthusiastic*).— We — we shall make the beginning. We, Sasha. Hand in hand. And we shall smile — like — spring and like the sun here in the basement when we go to our death.

Sasha.— Dearest?

Grisha.— My beloved!

Scene III

The preceding. Marianushka.

Marianushka (*coming down the stairs with a bitter laugh*).— Oh, you turtle doves! You butterflies! You do not seem to realize that you are caressing each other on the verge of an abyss.

Grisha.— Marianushka, you can only be bitter. What do you know of love now! (*Throws back her head.*) What — what can be sweeter than to love each other and to know — that you will have to die together.

Marianushka.— You won't die, little girl. You will live. They take only our men.

Sasha.— You have returned from the news office, dear Marianushka. What did you hear? How did Petrushka die? Where?

Marianushka (*sits down on the bench; with hollow voice*).— How do I know? I came there. The large place was crowded with women. None of them said a word. They were all cowards. They feared the officials and they dreaded the terrible truth. But if you had seen their eyes! Hatred and horror shrieked forth from them. Those eyes I shall not forget in all my life. "I have lost my support," cried their looks, "and I have children. How can I bring them up to an honest life?" And when they did ask the officials a question, they knew nothing — "We don't know. We don't know. We only know that they fell," was their answer. They too dreaded to give it. I pitied them. The sweat stood on their brows as though they were all thinking how terrible, how terrible is all this — And do you believe that one of those women went home? No, they all stayed there, standing and sitting around. And more and more came, more and more. They stood at the entrance and in a long file down the street, far, far down. And all these women had those terrible eyes. Then one uttered a shriek. Only one, but they all followed her. To heaven went forth this cry,— "Give us back our men. Our children call their fathers. They starve. What will you give our children in place of their fathers?" I rushed away. (*Stifling her sobs.*) Father in heaven, the child that I am to give birth to — Sasha, Grisha, what is to become of that child?

Sasha (*mastering his feeling*).— Give me strength. Grisha, Anushka, give me strength to be quiet.

Grisha.— Anushka, I shall love your child as if it were my own.

Marianushka (*again in a hollow, monotonous voice*).— When I went home I met a troop of soldiers. They came from the railway depot. A troop of wounded. They were dreadfully mangled; some faces ridden with bullets; some without feet, others without fingers. They still bore their uniforms. Dirty, torn uniforms of the sharpshooters. I recognized those at once. Petrushka had the same. I spoke to them, spoke to all, begged for news. "Did you know Petrushka? Petrushka? He served with you. He had a little scar on his cheek. A big, handsome, good man."— "What, he served with us? Petrushka?" Nobody, nobody knew anything about him, nobody had known him. O God! they live and they die

beside each other and never know each other. And they call one another brothers and the others enemies!

Sasha.— Stop, Anushka, stop!

Grisha.— Anushka, have you seen my brother, have you seen Andrew among them? He, too, served in the same regiment as your husband. If he, too, were wounded.

Marianushka (*gloomily*).— I did not see him. I did not look for him. I wanted to know how Petrushka had died.

Sasha (*moved*).— Sister, how hard you have become.

Grisha.— Anushka, don't I love Petrushka, too? Oh, if Andrew had come back crippled!

Marianushka.— Yes, I have become hard and embittered. Beside husband and child I care for nothing. Oh, but I can laugh too. I even laughed aloud. On my way back I met Natasha. She has her new hat already. She takes it easy. "Do you know," said she, laughing, "that I won't go home any more? Do you believe I want to support the old man, that — old sot? I am going to war. You know with whom? That little Colonel Tschertkoff. A good-natured stupid baldpate. Say, there are many going along. Look out, it's going to be lots of fun." I spat into her face. I only said: "Go along, here or there, it is all the same for the like of you."

Scene IV

The preceding. Kekulin. Matrena (*enter from street*)

Matrena.— Now speak like a sensible man, Dmitri. Did you take Ivan to the barracks? What did they say?

Kekulin (*drunk*).— What they said? Matrena, you know the clerk at the army store, they all respect him. Such a clerk is a person of importance, I tell you. When they come up to his desk they all take off their caps. Such a clerk, Matrena, you don't know what he is. Such a clerk rules more than the emperor.

Matrena (*touchingly*).— Dmitri — I am his mother. Did you take Ivan to the barracks this morning?

Kekulin.— Oh, ha, ha. Of course I did. "Ivan," said I, "I shall take you there. Don't you know that they all know me, Dmitri Kekulin? Don't you know that they all know how I fixed Pan Director Polyakin, all the subalterns?" "Dmitri," they will say — "hats off to you. You are a man. A capital fellow!" "No," I said, "I am your brother, I am brother Kekulin."

Marianushka.— Mother, he is lying. He is drunk.

Kekulin (*indignantly*).— So, so, I am lying? Well, then I need not say anything more.

Marianushka.— And now he is going to be stubborn.

Matrena.— Father Dmitri, don't torture me so. What has become of Ivan?

Kekulin (*kindly*).— Torture you, mother Matrena? No, such a good-hearted woman? No, mother, you need not worry. Your Ivan is in good hands.

Marianushka.— Indeed, in good hands.

Grisha.— Had many been drafted, father Dmitri? What did they have to say when Sasha failed to appear.

Kekulin.— Why surely. What do you think, you little grasshopper, do you think they will send Ivan out alone?

Matrena.— Well, tell us, what they had to do at the barracks. Tell us everything.

Kekulin.— Well, yes. You know how it is. How can you know everything? (*Grinning.*) Of course they — growl at them. Surely, mother, they did growl most fiercely.

Matrena. — Were others missing beside Sasha?

Kekulin.— Well, yes. Why should they not?

Marianushka.— Shall I tell you something, father Dmitri? You have not been there at all. You did not take Ivan to the barracks.

Kekulin.— Ha, ha. How smart you are, my dove. Do you believe that I would turn back half way? No, no, " Ivan," said I, " Ivan, now you go along. You will find your way. It is real nice in the barracks, go along. And come back hale and hearty." (*Sentimentally.*) Hale and hearty, yes, my dear heart, that's what I told him to console him.

Marianushka.— You were the right one to send along. Go on and sleep, and get rid of your jag, old sot.

Matrena.— Oh, Father in heaven, if Ivan, too, had not presented himself, I would not survive it. Sasha, Anushka, I can't bear this misery any longer.

Kekulin.— Mother Matrena, poor heart; it is not so bad as that. He surely has gone. Have you something to eat for me, Matrena?

Matrena (*absent, helpless*).— Come. Come along. You'll get something. Whether we'll have something to-morrow, that I —— (*sits down in the corner and weeps.*) Oh, my Savior, my dear Lord —— (*The dusk is rapidly setting in.*)

Scene V

The preceding. Andrew

Grisha.— Who comes there?

Sasha.— A soldier?

Marianushka (*spellbound*).— Petrushka? — impossible ——

Kekulin (*staggers towards the newcomer*).— Good day, my dear.

Andrew (*quietly comes down the stairs. Walks with a cane. His head is bandaged. Not recognizable*).

Marianushka (*stares at him; hollow voice*).— What do you wish?

Grisha (*anxiously*).— If it were — Andrew!

Andrew (*gloomily, embittered, very solemn, as if brooding about some one problem*).— You do not know your brother, Grisha? None of you recognize me?

Grisha (*rushes up to him*).— Andrew, my brother, you are back? O God, O God — No, thank God.

Andrew (*slowly nodding*).— Yes, yes ——

Matrena.— Take a seat, dear boy (*touchingly*). Are you too, hungry? Will you have something to eat?

Andrew (*absently nodding his assent*).— Yes, yes — This is the way we return, Sasha.

Grisha.— Dear brother, how glad I am! Oh, how glad that you are here, that I have you! Oh, you will see, I shall set you up again. You will be yourself again, Andrew, when I have you under my care.

Sasha.— Sit down, Andrew. Come here to the table. You are tired?

Andrew (*still absently*).— Yes, yes ——

Marianushka (*almost hatefully*).— Be glad that you have done with it. Rejoice that you are back. Others fare worse. Where did you leave Petrushka, Andrew? Did you see him die? Where did he die? I beg you tell me, I have no peace until I have heard it all.

Andrew.— Yes, yes ——

Grisha.— Dear Andrew, are you so worn out? You have not slept for a long while? Your bed is still in order. I have made it again and again; made it for you so you will rest well on your return.

Kekulin.— You know your old friend no more, Andrew? Dmitri Kekulin? If you only knew how I fixed Pan Director Polyakin, told him the truth ——

Andrew (*with an uncanny laugh*).— The truth — ha, ha ——

Sasha (*puts his arms about his shoulders*).— Dear Andrew, cannot we do something to you? What can I do for you? It pains me to see you so

quiet. What is it? What is torturing you? Tell us. Our hearts feel with you ——

Andrew (*still silent; then rises suddenly*).— Oh, oh — (*strikes the table with his fist. Then groans deeply*). Oh — damn — damn — damn it!

Marianushka.— War!

Sasha (*overpowered*).— Andrew!

Grisha.— Andrew!

Matrena (*staggers towards him; with a hollow voice*).— This is the way you return? This is the way? Oh, my children. Oh, Sasha, Ivan, Petrushka ——

Marianushka.— Did you see my husband die? Andrew, answer.

Andrew.— We were in the same line.

Marianushka (*triumphantly*).— You saw him — saw him die? Thanks Andrew, thanks.

Andrew.— I shall never forget that day. None of the days out there. When I think of them I feel — as if I were losing my reason — I must not think of them (*his head bowed, pressing his hands to his eyes*). It will make me insane (*suddenly bending over the table and stretching out his right hand in a visionary attitude*). But the most horrible thing — if you want to know the worst evil of such a battlefield — yes, storm on, rush ahead, rush like madmen — throw back the infantry of the enemy — but take heed of the barbed wires! They are stretched out crisscross. Try to cut them, they recoil like beasts and wind around the men who have stumbled through them! And then come the bullets and the shells, a shower of them, whizzing and howling as if hell were let loose — you want to flee — all want to flee! Whither? They run into the wires and the pits. Flight is impossible. Everything is shot down, and the pits are soon filled with bleeding, crying human beings ——

Marianushka.— And Petrushka. Tell me, Andrew, and Petrushka?

Andrew.— I saw him hanging on such a wire. He shrieked. Hewas writhing to free himself. He could not. The barbs held him —And then a bullet pierced his abdomen.

Marianushka.— What are you saying? What is that — you lie! You lie! People cannot be so fiendish to one another. They are beasts. No, not even beasts are like that. Oh — and why did you not help him? Why did you not tear loose from the wire?

Andrew.— Yes, why — why — Oh, yes, yes ——

Marianushka.— You have not been fair with him. Do you know what I ought to do now? (*She sobs convulsively.*)

Andrew.— Oh, yes, yes. What you ought to do! Hold still. Be quiet.

That is what we all *have* to do. When you have that red glare in your head, on the battlefield, do you believe you feel anything, you see anything? You are deaf. You are insensible. You hear and see nothing. You run and strike and shoot and think nothing of it. From sheer terror, from a frightful despair you become brave, you storm on and think only it must have an end: An end. An end either way, Anushka, I closed my eyes. It was the following night. I myself was torn up with wounds. If you knew how such a battlefield looks at night — heard those horrible groans far, far off. If you saw those mouths shrieking their agony towards heaven, and those faces, those eyes. Oh, the joy when a lantern approaches. It means help, succor. They search the battlefield — a few nurses. Oh, the misery of it when the lanterns stray off, further and further, and you remain lying in the dark.

Marianushka.— Did he say nothing? Did he send no message?

Andrew (*stands beside her*).— "Give my greetings to Marianushka. Tell her I loved her. And tell her; the child — the child ——" He could not say another word.

Marianushka.— Oh, Petrushka — my good husband — the child — the child — (*faints away*).

Grisha.— What ails her? Oh, mercy ——

Matrena (*sobbing aloud*).— Marianushka!

Sasha (*trembling*).— No, no. They may kill me, I shall not go.

Kekulin.— Andrew, did they send you boots soled with pasteboard?

(MARIANUSHKA *is led by* MATRENA *and* GRISHA *to the alcove, right. They lay her down on a bed.*)

Sasha.— Be quiet, father Dmitri. Do you keep quiet now.

Kekulin.— Well, yes. Yet Andrew, if you knew. "Pan Director," said I, "Pan Director Polyakin, you must not send boots soled with pasteboard to our soldiers at the front. They are our brothers."

SCENE VI

The preceding. Sergeant. Three soldiers

Sergeant (*middle aged, hardened, rough; enters with three armed soldiers*).— Does widow Grishewska live here?

Matrena (*trembling*).— Oh, God. Dear Father in heaven — (*clinging to* GRISHA). I knew they would come, Grisha! (*Appealing to* ANDREW.) Oh, my Father in heaven — Andrew ——

Andrew (*nodding*).— Yes, she lives here. What is it, Comrade?

Sergeant (*saluting*).— Comrade — (*turns to* MATRENA). Are you the widow Grishewska? Where is your son, Alexander?

Grishaw

Matrena.— He — He — He is not here — he is gone. He is on the way to barracks.

Sergeant.— Don't lie. I know that trick. Where have you hid him? Well? Speak! Hurry up.

Matrena.— I — I — did not hide him.

Sasha (*quietly*).— Here I am, I need not hide.

Sergeant.— So, it is you? Very well. You had orders to present yourself at ten o'clock at the Kasan barracks.

Sasha (*quietly*).— Yes.

Sergeant.— You knew it and you did not come? You should have obeyed. It would have been better.

Sasha.— I — I — cannot obey.

Grisha (*clinging to him*).— He cannot obey that order. He can't.

Sergeant (*grinning uncannily*).— Little brother, do you know what the paragraph referring to refusal reads like?

Sasha.— Yes — I know it, yes.

Marianushka (*regaining consciousness*).— What is the matter? What has happened to me? Oh, the pain — the pain — Oh — (*falls back*).

Sergeant.— Well, if you knew it you are a fool not to have come.

Sasha (*with deep emotion*).— Must I be a fool? (*Violently.*) I will not kill, it is sin. A sin against God and man.

Sergeant.— Nobody cares for that.

Marianushka.— Mother, what voices are these? I cannot rise —

Sasha.— But I care. Am I a human being only as long as you will let me be one? Whom do I benefit if I kill? It only means sowing wrath and hatred among people. Why should I do that? Of what use is it? It does no one good.

Sergeant (*dryly*).— So you are afraid, little brother? We have a cure for that. Stepan, take him between you.

Grisha.— This you won't do. Unless you walk over my body.

Sasha.— Don't, Grisha. Don't resist.

Matrena (*weeping*).— Have pity, have pity. I gave you Ivan, my other son.

Sergeant.— I am doing my duty. Seize him.

Matrena (*breaking down*).— Mercy upon us. Look, there lies my daughter. They shot her husband in war. She has just learned how he died. Have pity. In the name of our Savior don't take from me that boy. Who shall support us?

Sergeant.— That does not concern me. (*To* SASHA.) You know if you refuse we won't stand on any ceremony.

Sasha.— I won't resist — I — I shall go with you. I want to help those who lie around the battlefield bleeding and mained. I will nurse them. I won't sleep or eat. I shall care for them day and night. But I won't kill. Rather shall you kill me.

Grisha.— And me. Take me with him. We want to die together.

Sergeant.—Talk! Nursing! Nonsense. You have been drafted for the army. That's all. And now go ahead.

Marianushka.— Mother, is it the soldiers? They want to get Sasha? (*With a wild outcry.*) You dare not. You cannot drag them all to be slaughtered out there. (*Writhing on the bed.*) Give me back my husband. I claim him from you (*breaks out into long sobs*). Lord in heaven, is there no more justice on earth?

Kekulin (*gently, touchingly*).— Oh, my dear, be quiet. Think of the child — the child ——

Marianushka.— The child — the poor child ——

Andrew (*solemnly, strangely*).— Comrade, have you been at the front? They are not fair with us, who sent us out there. It will do no longer. It is against all reason. It is a crime. Those horrors are inhuman.

Sergeant.— Don't talk drivel. You know that I must obey. Can't you believe that it is hard enough for me? I, too, wish I were doing something else. But what's the use? Come, don't tarry any longer. It is nonsense.

Sasha (*quietly, with bowed head*).— Mother — Andrew — Anushka — farewell. Oh, mother. Oh, Grisha. Do I cause you grief?

Matrena.— Sasha, my child — I shall not survive this.

Grisha (*wildly*).— Sasha, I am laughing. They shall take me along with you.

Marianushka (*drags herself across the floor on her knees*).— Oh, Mother in heaven — that pain — let me have the strength. Let me only rise. I will get him out of their hands. I shall strangle them. Oh, that pain — (*the soldiers have reached the stairs with* SASHA).

Sergeant (*pushing* GRISHA *back*).— Back, I say. What do you want? Back!

Grisha.— Oh, let me go along. I must be with him.

Sergeant.— Go away. You won't come along.

Grisha (*staggering back*).— But you shall take me. We want to die together. You heartless — you cruel brutes! (*Crying out to the others.*) They have taken him from me! They have torn me away from him!

Matrena (*wailing*).— My children, my children!

Grisha.— Andrew! Father Dmitri! Anushka! Help! Free him!

They take him away and I cannot go with him. Oh, is there no one to help me? Oh, Sasha, Sasha!

Marianushka (*prostrate*).— Now live! Now laugh! Now you know what love is, you unhappy girl!

Grisha (*falling down beside her*).— They have taken him from me — Marianushka — Marianushka.

ACT III

SCENE: *as before. Evening*

SCENE I

MARIANUSHKA *lies asleep in alcove, right; the curtains are thrown back.* MATRENA *is busy with the child of* MARIANUSHKA, *that has just died. The body is in a covered basket on a chair in background.* KEKULIN *is standing beside her, evidently perturbed.* ANDREW *on bench by the table wearily supporting his head.* GRISHA *in corner by the stove absently staring before her.*

Matrena (*helpless, bowed with grief, sobbing*).— Oh, oh, there it lies, the baby. Only two days old and dead already. I knew it. How could it have lived? Oh, father Dmitri, I could weep — weep all the time.

Kekulin (*gently*).— Poor heart! Don't weep. It is better, after all. What was to become of such a child in the world?

Andrew (*slowly nodding*).— Yes — such a child has more sense than a grown-up — gets out of it right away.

Matrena.— Oh, I also wish that I had died long ago. What is a mother's life? It brought nothing to me but sorrow — and misery.

Grisha (*weeping; quietly goes to her*).— Yes, mother, you always had to suffer. You only lived for the others. Poor, good, dear mother.

Matrena.— I am so tired — so tired.

Grisha.— You ought to get some sleep, mother dear. I shall stay awake.

Matrena (*with a painful smile*).— Sleep? Sleep? Do you believe that I have closed my eyes during all these nights? I have been sitting in the chair and thinking: what did I do that trouble should never leave this house?

Andrew (*rising; gently but earnestly*).— Mother Matrena, you must not give up to those thoughts. It is of no use. You were always a good mother. Don't worry about that.

Matrena (*overpowered by her great sorrow*).— But I can bear this no longer. I — I — can't. I am breaking down. Ivan at the front, Marianushka between life and death. The baby dead — and Sasha ——

Grisha (*sobbing aloud*).— Sasha in prison. Oh, mother, mother, I cannot stand this suspense, either. I am breaking down under this strain. Why did they not take me with him? I think just as he does, I am as much to blame.

Matrena.— I — I have such a strange feeling to-day — all day. Supposing this were his last night!

Grisha.— His last night?

Kekulin.— Dear child, I don't believe it.

Andrew (*quietly, earnestly*).— Yes. If at the last moment he would say: All right, I am going — you know they say we are to have peace.

Kekulin.— Mother Matrena, Possilowitsch said so, too.

Andrew.— It may come over night, like the war.

Grisha.— No, no. You only want to quiet us. It is Sasha's last night. The last night. To-morrow they will take him out into the court and shoot him dead. And he won't ever say a word in his defense; he does not need it because he is so good. Oh, mother, mother! (*She prostrates herself beside* MATRENA *and hides her head in the old woman's lap.*)

Matrena (*in despair*).— Child — child! I can't bear it — can't bear it any longer!

Andrew.— Be quiet, sister. You are only exciting mother Matrena so much more.

Kekulin.— I told him: Sasha, said I, don't be so stupid, it is not so bad, after all, to be in the army.

Andrew (*gently putting his arm about* MATRENA'S *shoulder*).— Mother dear, money worries will be spared you as soon as my wounds are healed.

Grisha (*raising her tear-stained face*).— Yes, mother, I too will be strong. Did he not write we should not weep for him? Mother, I shall be your daughter henceforth. I shall love you. Before your lips utter them I shall read all your wishes in your eyes.

Matrena.— You are all so good. (*Caresses* GRISHA'S *hair.*) But my Sasha, my Sasha! To die so young.

Kekulin.— Sh, sh, sh! You'll wake Marianushka.

Marianushka (*tosses about feverishly*).

Matrena.— She is sleeping. God forgive my sin, but I wished——

Andrew.— What did you wish, mother Matrena?

Matrena.— Oh, never mind. But I only said — if they really shoot him, then — then —(*she smiles absently*).

Grisha (*hastily, with eyes aflame*).— Yes, yes! I shall do something, mother. I am going to avenge him. Avenge him.

Andrew (*quietly*).— What will you do?

Grisha (*abruptly*).— Did he not write that his action shall be a seed?

A seed that will not die? I am the next one to be killed — after I have killed his murderers.

Andrew (*very quietly*).— You will do nothing of that kind, sister. You do not even know his murderers.

Grisha.— I shall learn who gave the order to kill him.

Andrew.— Grisha, whom will you benefit by it? Surely not Sasha?

Grisha (*with a start*).— Sasha? No, no, not Sasha. You are right. But what shall I do? I must do something that will avenge him?

Andrew (*with a hollow voice*).— Wait, Grisha. Perhaps we shall soon have peace. Perhaps they will pardon him, or be content with a few years of penal labor.

Grisha (*faltering*).— Yes — yes. Then I could go with him. Could suffer everything with him.

Kekulin.— Sh, sh, sh — Marianushka.

Marianushka (*moves and groans. All listen*).— Why, yes. But I can't — not so quickly — Oh, oh ——

Matrena.— It is the second day that she is delirious.

Grisha.— Oh, mother, I never knew what a mother has to suffer.

Marianushka (*crying out*).—No, no. Let it alone. Not that—not that!

Matrena.— And yet she sleeps. We must be quiet. It excites her when we talk.

Andrew.— If Petrushka knew.

Grisha (*whispering timidly*).— Last night when I was sitting up, she called Petrushka all the time. It was horrible. It was such a quiet night. You could not help being afraid. "Do you see him, mother?" she called and pointed to the blank wall. "Do you see him wiping his blood?" I shuddered when I heard her cry out: "Petrushka, Petrushka!"

Kekulin.— And when she learns that the child is dead ——

Grisha.— She sang, too. Suddenly she began:

In the mountains sang the nightingale,
So sweetly it sang;
The song my sweetheart sang,
More sweetly rang,
Now he has gone to war!

Marianushka.— Oh, oh, my child, my darling. Sleep — sleep.

Grisha.— Listen, she is talking of the baby.

Marianushka.— My little Petrushka — are you well? You are laughing. Don't laugh so, don't laugh! It hurts me.

Andrew.—Mother Matrena, move her pillow a little, her head hangs down.

Marianushka.— You want me to come? You do? (*She motions in her sleep, her face is radiant.*) Yes, I will come, I am coming, Petrushka.

Kekulin (*at the baby's basket*).— There it lies, the little one. And it is dead, and the mother does not know it. What does one live for, anyway? If — if you are gone so suddenly as that, and know nothing of yourself.

Matrena.— Come, Dmitri, one should not look like that into the face of a corpse. It will disturb its peace in the grave.

Andrew (*with head bowed, nods sadly*).— Out there we did not look at our dead, neither. We had mountains of them. Face downward we laid them into the large black holes. We could not throw the earth into their open, staring eyes — I — I cannot bear to think of it. For when I do — (*suddenly with an uncanny absent stare*). It will do no more. It is beyond man's power to bear it. Sasha has done right. No revolt, no — but simply say you can't. It is too horrible. It is no longer human.

Grisha (*wildly*).— See, Andrew, Sasha's deed is a seed that will bear fruit. You yourself ——

Andrew (*slowly, with an uncanny composure*).— I, myself — well, what of it? Am I not quiet? What do you want?

Grisha.— You only seem quiet. If you think of war you are like one beside himself.

Andrew (*with an effort to change the subject; slowly*).— Mother Matrena, it is useless for you to try to watch to-night.

Grisha.— To-night it is my turn. Oh, please, dear, dear mother.

Kekulin (*touchingly*).— Mother Matrena, you really must have some sleep. If you are willing, I am going to sit up. When Anushka asks, " Dmitri, how is the baby? " I shall make a stupid face and say, " Marianushka, he is a splendid boy. He laughs the whole evening," and when she says, " Come, give him to me," then will I say, " Not to-night, my dove, it is almost ten, and when you look at him with your big eyes he might be frightened. To-morrow, Marianushka, to-morrow." Mother Matrena, shan't I sit up? I have nothing at all to do since Polyakin ——

Matrena.— You are a good man, Dmitri. But to think of sleep when one's child is in danger?

Scene II

The preceding. Sipjagin *enters through the door in rear*

All.— Sh, sh, sh — Anushka.

Sipjagin (*muttering quietly*).— Well, well, I have not said a word so far! Well, children, no more overtime. To-night was the end of it. On Mikolai Bridge there was a dense crowd, I hardly could get through it.

Grisha (*trembling*).— If we should have peace, if peace were to come! (*Changing her tone.*) Father, little Petrushka died an hour ago.

Sipjagin.— Oh, no, the little fellow? Oh, mother Matrena, I am very sorry. Really (*stepping up to the basket*),—good gracious, well, you can't blame him (*solemnly shakes his head*). Well, well. I think this is for the best. You really can't blame him.

Marianushka (*in her sleep*).— There, there, the big black cloth!

Sipjagin.— Is she still talking like that? It has been hard for her! Yes, life is not beautiful. It means nothing but suffering.

Matrena (*nodding slowly*).— Suffering. That's true; such suffering.

Sipjagin (*starting as though he had something on his mind*).— Y-e-s — (*Silence.*)

Grisha.— You are all so quiet. (*Silence.*)

Sipjagin.— That's on account of the baby. Where there is death you are quiet.

Grisha.— It is just as if you were all waiting for some one else to die.

Sipjagin (*turns around silently*).

Grisha.— But you need not act like that. I — I — I — am not crying. (*Sobbing. Exit right.*)

Sipjagin (*after a little while*).— It is a great blow.

Kekulin.— All night she has been talking about him.

Andrew.— It will be best to leave her alone. Everybody does best in working out his own problems.

Sipjagin (*to* ANDREW, *who sits to the front; softly*).— Andrew, it is all over with him.

Andrew (*starting, with suppressed emotion, also softly, hastily*).— What do you say? What time? Sasha?

Sipjagin (*nods*).— Be quiet. After supper I will tell her.

Andrew.— But that is impossible — so quickly?

Sipjagin.— This morning (*turns about cautiously*), I know it from the guard.

Andrew.— Who threw out the letter to you for Grisha?

Sipjagin.— I had hardly stood there a quarter of an hour to-night, when I saw him at the window and beckoned. He looked down, shrugged his shoulders, crossed himself and did — this (*stealthily indicates death by hanging*).

Andrew (*stands in silence; stares at the floor*).— Not even a soldier's death did they allow him?

Kekulin (*who has been listening without understanding*).— What is the matter? Another letter?

Sipjagin.— Not to-night, Dmitri.

Andrew (*without another word slowly exit, right*).

Sipjagin (*whispering after him*).— Do it gently, Andrew.

Kekulin.— What is it those two have together. (*He shakes his head, stands still for a moment, and turns to* MATRENA.) Yes, mother Matrena, supposing I sit up? (*He receives no reply.*)

Matrena (*sits in a chair in utter helplessness*).

Kekulin.— I — I think — I could do it? (*Pause.*)

Matrena (*staring before her in a stupor*).— Kekulin ——

Kekulin.— Mother Matrena?

Matrena.— When I was a young girl of sixteen, an old, old woman told my fortune. From this hand, it was; when I was going with Fedor.

Kekulin.— And what did she say?

Matrena.— She said: you will have children, and you will not have children.

Kekulin.— Well, that's the way. What can be done about it?

Matrena (*trembling*).— I — I have children and I have none. Oh, Dmitri, Fedor was just like Sasha. He was so good, so good. He died too early for the children. They would not have had to live in a cellar. (*Weeps.*)

Kekulin (*touchingly*).— Now, now, old woman? Don't weep like that. You only make me sad, too.

Matrena (*nodding*).— Your life long you never get tired of weeping, no more than of bread.

Kekulin.— That's so. They belong together, Matrena. Shall I sit up?

Matrena.— I am going to call you, father Dmitri, if — if — I should need you.

Grisha (*enters from right*).

Kekulin.— Well, you are going to have company. Good night, mother Matrena. (*Exit left.*)

Grisha.— I have been rash, mother Matrena, but I love him so ——

Matrena (*mechanically stroking her hair*).— Yes, yes! You do love him.

Grisha.— And he loves me.

Matrena.— And he loves you.

Grisha.— That is why, mother (*she puts her arms about* MATRENA), that is why I am now your daughter.

Matrena (*sits quietly with folded hands*).

Grisha.— Am I not your daughter?

Matrena.— By the Holy Mother, you are!

Grisha (*rising softly*).— Shall I keep watch to-night?

Matrena.— After midnight you may come.

Grisha.— You should lie down. You must be worn out.

Matrena.— After — midnight.

Grisha (*kisses her*).— Very well, mother, I shall wait. (***Softly exit.***)

Scene III

MATRENA. MARIANUSHKA.

(MATRENA *sits in her chair praying. Her mumbling is heard. She stares wearily in front of her and finally falls asleep. The candle on the table burns faintly. The rear of the room is dark.*)

Marianushka (*awakes and sits up*).— Yes, yes. The drums are beating, " Romidom — Romidom." (*She listens as to sounds in the distance.*) I must put up my hair — it is so long since I looked pretty. (*She fusses with her loose black hair.*) He liked me to open it at night. Now he will come home never more and Marianushka sits and weeps! (*Silence. Then poeple are heard walking past on the street and talking.*) I — I know it. The little wound with the black rim in your breast, close below the mole — I was there when that bullet struck you — Marianushka saw it and could not help you. (*Pause. Looking up.*) What does my dolly want? Can you laugh? (*She laughs softly.*) Well? Such an angry face? Oh, oh. Why should you cry so? Is it not enough if Marianushka cries? (*With a strange and absent look.*) When I was a child, I had a doll. It looked like you. It stared at me, never moving, like you (*smiling*). Doll eyes! Put away the cradle! I don't want to see the child! (*She stares before her.*) What have I to do with the child? (*Pause. Then she sings.*)

In the mountains sang the nightingales
So sweetly they sang!
The song my sweetheart sang
More sweetly rang,—
Now he has gone to war!

How dark it is here! As in Petrushka's grave. There he lies and wants to get out and can't and wants to cry, to call, Marianushka, Marianushka! But the grave digger comes and digs and digs and never helps him. Oh, there you are. (PETRUSHKA *appears in center.*)* Why, they shot you, you and the others?

I know a little flower
Deep in the valley, deep —
That flower will I pluck
For you to keep!

*It is left to the stage manager's judgment, whether Marianushka's hallucination shall be embodied by the apparition of Petrushka or not; certainly it is not meant to be a theatrical stage trick.

There! Where is your hand? The hand you gave me? You left your hand in the grave? Why? I saw you first in the garden, I know it well. Why do you look at me so? I did you no harm. Come, lie down beside me (*she moves as if to make room. The apparition is immovable*). It is warm here. I will kiss you. Oh, come, or I will come to you. Don't you know Marianushka any more? Yes, I have grown old. I have been alone so long. But now I am young again, and blithe, and there are two of us. Will you not look at your child? There in the basket. It is a doll. Its eyes are of glass. Nine months I waited for it — and now that it is here — I am not glad. It is all suffering. (*Pause, pleadingly.*) Petrushka, say one word. Are you hungry? What — they starved you out there? In the drawer of the table you may find a few crusts. I have nothing else for you. (*Begins to cry.*) Only a piece of hard bread. But look into the basket. (*The apparition slowly moves through the room and bends over the basket.*) It is your child, it has your eyes. I have thought of it day and night. (*The apparition turns around.*) It caused me much suffering. But now, all is well. (*Outside bells begin to ring. People excitedly hurry along.*) Oh, come! I have waited and wept so long for you. You are beckoning me? I should go with you! Why yes, yes, I am coming. Petrushka, Petrushka! (*she rises from her bed and staggers towards center. Approaching the apparition with arms outstretched, she calls*) Petrushka, Petrushka. (*The apparition vanishes and* MARIANUSHKA *utters a groan of agony and falls dead. For a time deep silence, then the frantic cry of* GRISHA, *followed by her wail:* " Why did you not tell me before? I knew it long ago! "

(*Enter* GRISHA, *soon after* SIPJAGJN *and* ANDREW, *rushing in from right.*)

Grisha.— Marianushka, they have killed him! They have murdered him, Marianushka, they have killed him!

Sipjagin, Andrew (*simultaneously*).— Grisha, listen! Grisha, be quiet, child. Dear, dear Grisha.

Grisha (*crying in the arms of* SIPJAGIN).— Mother, don't you hear? Mother, wake up, they have murdered Sasha.

Matrena (*starting from sleep, drowsily*).— Well, what is it? Marianushka, what is it? Listen to the bells! the bells! Look at the crowds! If this were peace!

Grisha (*desperately*).— Let me go. Let me go. (*Terrorstricken.*) What do you say, mother? Peace? Now — peace? (*With a gesture of threat.*) Now? No, — war! (*Falls upon her knees sobbing.*)

CORDIA

(A drama in three acts)

By Hyacinth Stoddart Smth

PERSONS

Argentine
Clusa, his wife
Cordia
Maxime, an elderly man
Toinetta, a friend and companion of Clusa
Louise, a friend of Toinetta, visiting her.

ACT I

(Argentine *and* Maxime *are seated on the unroofed verandah of a dark-red and dreary-looking house. It is a place near the sea, and far removed from cities. Morning.*)

Maxime.— Being just you are contented.
Argentine.— 'Tis but this
I see what is to see.
Maxime.— Preoccupied,
You watch the world as one who, at the play,
Forgets himself in interest profound
When Lear bears dead Cordelia in his arms.
You look on other men — 'tis never yours
To form a part of what you see or hear!
Argentine.— Clusa said something like that: she too thinks
I am in nature like to silver, cold;
Or, as a martyr may in burning feel
No pain, because his soul is far aloof,
So I'm abstracted in a thousand plays
Of little pleasures in each passing day,
And thus the fires of life do not scorch me —
So Clusa says.
Maxime.— I think since Cordia came
Clusa appears more gay, more like a girl.

Argentine.— Ah, I should like to make her always glad.
Maxime.— Yet you allow her to select her ways,
And you accept what comes.
Argentine.— She shall be free.
Maxime.— Women do not wish freedom, Argentine.
You say, indifferent, ' I cannot change
Her character or thought — she lives her life.'
Argentine.— And do I not, so saying, franchise her,
Give her own nature scope for happiness ?
Maxime.— O foolish Argentine! — from first to last
We are our brothers' keepers, as I think,
And certainly our wives! What *we* desire
For them, this makes them glad, not what they wish.
Argentine.— I am contented, and if she is not
How could I make content for her where love
Did not provide her with it ? It is clear
All evil in the world consists in this,
That 'twixt the object and the appetite
There is a disagreement — one falls short:
As when man has what he does not desire,
Or else desires what he has not. For Clusa,
If she compare her spirit with this life
That accident or fate has given her,
She will, desiring not amiss, be happy.
Maxime.— 'Tis well for you to know a deep content
With what you have yourself. But for the one
With whom we live, or for the world of men,
We should not be contented with their wants.
Believe you have too much, but think that they
Too little have — this mends a broken world!
Argentine (*rising restlessly*).—No man can satisfy a world of wants;
To wish to, only makes a want the more.
Maxime.— Ah, Argentine, your wants are really few;
You nobly deem that your deserts are small,
Holding yourself at modest valuation.
My point is, if we scant our own desires
We from our surfeit save for others' needs.
You, my good friend, have much; you have content:
But think your Clusa is a prey to want,
And give her all your mind and heart can offer.

(*The door opens and* CLUSA *comes upon the verandah. She is pale, with a luminous, childlike face. As she advances,* MAXIME *rises.*)

Argentine.— We are contented, Clusa, are we not?

(CLUSA *hesitatingly looks on* ARGENTINE *with a slow movement of the head. Tears come to her eyes.*)

Clusa.— You are a balanced great man, Argentine!
Ah, you are ever easy, undisturbed;
The look of life does not affright your eyes.
In the simplicity of your large soul
You would believe that every one must be
As genuine as yourself, simple and calm.
You do not know that in so many minds
There are fine webs of intricate loves and hates,
Delicate films that shudder in the wind
Like the ethereal fiber of a cloud,
And close upon the beauty of the mind
As dewy weft on flowers of the grass!
Such subtile gossamer has never spun
Its threads upon your life. Clear in desire
For plain and honest happiness, you demand
The world be not complex.

Argentine.— Have I not you?

(*He kisses her hand and passes out with a book, humming contentedly.*)

Clusa (*turning to Maxime*).—Aught in the vision to disturb his good
He sees but as a cobweb, crushes it,
Though circle upon circle, arch on arch,
With silken strands it fashions miracles.
My Argentine! he is a silver knight,
Who would do battle for the sake of peace
But not for passion of a heart's desire.

Maxime.— Yes, nothing could tempt Argentine to risk
Or jeopardize his peace, not even love.

Clusa (*sitting beside a table upon which is a half-finished oval basket of withes and sweet grass, and beginning to weave it*).—
Not love. His way with Cordia vouches that.
He plays with Cordia as a comrade would
With comrade. Why, I love her more than he!
Though one would think that here with Argentine
I never could be lonely or know need —
He is my source of life, the branch I grow on —

Yet other fruits may flourish on this branch,
And I would reach to them, caressing them,
As rubs a peach its sisters, flushed and ripe;
For until now I never had a friend.
And Cordia's as innocent as fruit
That nature has perfected for man's joy.
No threat from her against my husband's peace.
But ah, from me — 'tis here the danger lies.
I think I owe him truth.

Maxime.— The truth? What truth?

Clusa.— The truth of me and all that I have been.
Less cannot satisfy the due of love.

Maxime.— He does not know? You never have had courage?

Clusa.— One time I almost reached the strength to tell,
When, looking on the moon, I felt the tides
Of all my better nature rushing on,
As does the sea in August, when, at flood,
It fills the darkness of the unused caves
With its delicious splash. Then does the moon
Order the waters, mightily disturbed,
To press and urge their highest on the shore.
Oh, how my soul to that pure light responded!
And then a cloud of white, bent wondrously
Against the clear, I saw lean in the sky,
As might a suppliant goddess who entreats
Virtue within the breast of erring ones.
And she became to me the spirit of truth,
And she demanded of me that I tell
To Argentine all that I ever was.
It seemed the shape of that white-garmented
Creature of moonlit sky that spoke to me,
And all her lines had utterance more kind
Than any speech; and while I watched her float,
As one might watch the soul-revealing eyes
Of a beloved presence plead for hope,
With eloquence of tears and the entreating
Of more than words can utter, the soft glory
Of my far cloud caressed me with its light
And moved me with its silence tenderly.

Maxime.— And did you dream its beauty found a voice?
Clusa (*letting her work fall and gazing straight ahead*).—
Yes, this is what I heard within my soul:
'All mortals cry to know the heart of truth,
This is their struggle. Every loftiest spire
That lifts its high point o'er cathedral roofs
Is raised by men to symbolize the truth
That they would reach; and every little school
Hears children prattle toward the far-off truth.
For man claims truth as surely as death claims man.
Strong souls in every fateful crisis call
Aloud for truth, though its returning voice
Be a swift stab to all their hopes and longings.
This pain of truth is like a martyrdom,
Sweeter to bear than any happiness
That comes in blindness. Thus of his just heaven
Your love you still despoil, who keep from him
The truth about yourself, though like a knife
'Twould pierce his very vitals. 'Tis his right
To die of what is real, rather than live
Befooled in this deception dealt to him.
Love is not love without sincerity;
The unbared soul is love's most cherished prize.
All great men wish the open face of life,
The every deed of those who cross their path
And look them in the eyes. No face must lie,
No sinner go unrecognized his way.
Thus greatness lives, and he who crawls before it
Seeking to carry by some stain, some guilt,
Some hidden wrong, might better with sharp fangs
Have set upon his master than have kept
One action lost to him. For truth twins death,
In being a requirement life must meet.
And you, O Clusa, you would let him lie
Beside you in the night, yet hide from him
This truth that his great nature justly claims
And love demands — the truth of all you were!'
Thus spoke to me the spirit in the cloud.
But when I looked on Argentine I found
It was not in my strength to clear my soul.

If he, being told, could know and love me still
Then all were nobly better than before;
But if his eyes saw darkness deep in mine —
I dared not risk — you see I am a coward.

(CLUSA, *having risen, clasps her hands with a gesture of humiliation. Maxime takes both her hands in his and speaks in a voice of deep sympathy, understanding, and emotion.*)

Maxime.— That which is unseen, Clusa, my dear child,
Is known to men by that which they do see,
And you are beautiful! What language more
Need Argentine be given to reveal you?

Clusa.— You think me beautiful who so have sinned!

Maxime.— Perchance this truth you speak of is divine,
And thus in its high nature is too much
For men to hear and see. Truth must descend
To be received by mortals, and to sink
It loses something, changes its pure essence
For substance grosser to the human sense,
Or must be wholly hidden, for man's good.
It may be that your love for Philip, Clusa,
Was such a truth, which, shown to Argentine
In all the natural passion of its being,
Would not be understood aright by him.

Clusa (*withdrawing her hands*).—Oh, do not give a voice to my own pleadings
Against my better self! This does not sit
Upon your years; you should be stern with me
And bring me to my duty.

Maxime.— Ah, my years!
But all I was is like a memory,
A thing to be recounted and not felt.
So may I talk and counsel, while you live
And with your actions voice necessity,
As I describe and pardon it. Dear child,
Sit here and talk to me, and ease your heart.

(MAXIME *makes room on a bench for the little figure of* CLUSA. *She sits down slowly beside* MAXIME, *clasping her hands.*)

Clusa.— My memory is cold concerning that
For which I should so poignantly repent.
Amid the swift catastrophe of love

I had no space for thinking — I was rapt
From all the calmness serving meditation.
And since that time my mind can travel back
But limply and without the power of vision.
So betwixt heat of deeds and chill of thoughts
I've had small pause for pondering my sin.

Maxime.— If time and nature thus are merciful,
Unto the guilt, they teach ourselves to be so;
And less of wrong than fate was in your love.

Clusa (*after a pause*).— Have you thought ever how a tender rose
Must bide upon its stem, howe'er it longs
To travel forth like men? It watches them
Walking about its little roadside bush
In all the freedom, grandeur of the human!
And then a woman clips the fragrant flower
And puts it on her breast and takes it forth
On some far journey; but such plucking drains
The unheld sap, until the blossom dies.
To walk men's ways, the rose, though it should rest
On never so fair a bosom, droops and fades.
And as the stranger to the rose, Love is
The ravager of man. For oh, how free,
Unto us mortals, looks the flying course
Of this great goddess Love! Till in our place
We nod and lean and wonder and aspire
To be borne up aloft upon Love's wings
And know that heavenly triumphant flight!
Then one day comes the goddess, reaches, takes
The human blossom, bears it far away,
And through some nights and days it breathes the breeze
Of swiftness, which beyond all earthly winds
Gives to the caught soul that inebriant air
Which is the motion of Love's mighty wings!
But ah, upon this flight we are consumed
As on the maiden's breast the warmed rose dies.

Maxime.— The rose would fade and fall if left alone.

Clusa.— Yes, yes. So we accept — how willingly! —
This fateful journey, eagerly we wait
For love's wings to brush by us on our path.
With pale uplifted petals I besought

Consuming love to come, and lo! and lo!
She stooped and took me on her dizzy flight,
Her pitiless passage through that region vast
Of rain and storm and moon and sun and stars;
And in her arms I was a prisoner,
And from her path I saw the deeps of life!

Maxime.— Then did the thought of Philip so inspire you?

Clusa.— It was as if I dreamed. Awakening came,
And when I looked, Philip was there no more,
And it was Argentine I traveled with.

Maxime.— And now you love as one who, gently floating,
Sees life arise like banks of summer flowers.
Drink deep their fragrance, and let slip the past!
The flow of time has carried you thus far.
Why should you hasten it? It will sweep on
And soon enough bring heavy destiny
To all of us.

Clusa.— It would be sweet to drift
And watch the flowers. One blossom near my stream
Enriches shore and air transcendently,
As if she bent and swayed with all her weight
Of singular deliciousness of beauty.

Maxime.— What blossom do you mean — your Cordia?

Clusa.— Yes, Cordia — a rose Love has not plucked
And borne away.

Maxime.— She is a waiting rose,
But how she waits!

Clusa (*looking puzzled, is about to question* MAXIME, *when she sees* CORDIA).—
Look, she is coming now.

(CORDIA, *straight and languid, with a far-away, wistful gaze and smile, comes upon the verandah. She always has the motion of trying to cover her heart either with hands or drapery.* CLUSA *embraces her.*)

Clusa.— How slim your little body, Cordia,
And how soft your kiss!

Cordia.— I sometimes think
There's no such thing as body — there's but flame.

(ARGENTINE *re-enters.* CORDIA *seems to avoid looking at him.*)

Maxime.— Yes, we're all flame, the living part of us.
Youth passes as the morning's colors pass,

Leaving the world the same, yet not the same;
For it is evanescent as the dawn,
Whose very beauty burns itself away.

Clusa.— Then nature would instruct us to enjoy,
That youth and beauty which cannot endure.
This loveliness of earth, if we revere it,
Enters our souls and makes our love more rich.

Cordia.— Does not our love cause us to feel the beauty
That heaven and earth make us familiar with?
Those who love not are sightless as the blind.

(CORDIA *begins to look at* ARGENTINE, *and looks and looks with one long gaze. The others see it, and* CLUSA *watches* ARGENTINE *and* CORDIA *jealously.*)

Maxime.— Even the blind, I think, might be content
Could they behold but once our sunrise here.
Have you seen, Cordia, the rainbow glow
Of these seraphic dawns from out the sea?
Innocence dwells in them, so too the power
Of great creation's matchless majesty.
Dawn has such colors as no time else has,
For certain hues exclusively are hers,
Making for us new regions of delight.
So morning seems the hour that's nearest heaven,
Since fresher is its splendor than the day's.

Argentine.— Yes, Cordia has risen ere the sun;
I saw her at her window yesterday
Before the red orb with slow hesitance
Had left the sea. And Cordia's hair was loose,
And it was streaming over her shoulders then
When I beheld her, as the moonlight streams
Striated on the shoulder of a wave
That breaking seems to throw back tossing hair
Of palely shining gold.

Cordia.— You saw me then?

Argentine.— I think I did not see you, just your hair.
Have you not, Clusa, praised her tresses' gold?

Clusa (*putting aside her jealousy and smoothing* CORDIA'S *hair*).
She is an angel crowned with light from heaven.
Her fairness seems a holy thing to me.

Maxime.— You mount so high in our love, Cordia,
Because you have such depth.
Cordia.— I cannot hide it.
Maxime.— Ah, I have seen it, but the rest have not.
Clusa.— What do you mean? You speak in mysteries.
Cordia.— He means my power to love!
(CLUSA *starts*, MAXIME *looks at* CORDIA *warningly.*)
Maxime.— And to be kind!
Cordia.— How can one hide one's heart?
Clusa.— 'Tis easier
To hide one's heart than to reveal its all.
Maxime.— For you, though not for her! But, Cordia,
When youth is true and kind, its beauty makes
That kindness simpler and more beautiful
Than could the wisdom of experience.
Kindness in youth is like the resurrection
Full of the glory of an infinite promise.
While on me, Cordia, gentleness would sit
Weighted with reminiscence and with tears.
Cordia.— But I have wept, Maxime.
Clusa.— Dear Cordia,
Come, put your arms about me and be happy.
Where'er you go you scatter roses red,
Whose beauty makes us better and more glad.
Cordia (*speaking very slowly and directly, looking at* ARGENTINE).
Do you see heart-red roses dropping down
Wherever I am going, Argentine?
(*She takes her hand away from her heart. All look at her.* ARGENTINE *starts. He alone seems to see blood above her breast, a red spot on her gown.*)
Argentine (*as if to himself*).— There's blood above her heart, and it drips down!
(*Then aloud, looking at Cordia*).— I see you've lost the roses from your cheeks.

ACT II

(*Two young women are seated on low chairs in a large, rather bare room of the red house by the sea. The women are embroidering. It is late afternoon.*)

Louise.— Clusa and Argentine are always paired.
Toinetta.— They're very happy.
Louise.— They are fond of the sea.
Toinetta.— They walk upon the hills and in the woods,
And find the rocks as good as royal thrones.
They love this country. Oft abroad at night
They thrust their torches into faggot piles
To watch the flames, and from the flames, the sea.
Louise.— Why does the charm'd girl go so often with them,
The stranger who looks long at Argentine?
Toinetta.— He does not see her, though she sees but him.
Louise.— 'Tis plain that Clusa loves her, sister-like.
Toinetta (*putting down her work and looking dreamily away*).—
Oh, Clusa pities her. You know they say
A story goes abroad of one strange night
When she upon a hill, midsummer eve,
Was victim of a spell.
Louise (*rising and walking up and down*). —The gypsies tell it!
Their fierceness is like fire that eats the woods,
And makes the saplings, by the flames unleafed,
Like shadows lean. Cordia has been a stem
For their hot words, and who knows why but they.
Toinetta.— I know not why: perhaps 'tis fantasy,
For they say, speaking of this Cordia,
There was a young girl once, slender, intense,
Who took the rising fever from the earth,
That burns in summer nights, within her veins.
She never lost, deep in her circled eyes,
The memory of darkness. In her heart,
As glows a candle's flame within a lantern
Made of a melon on all hallow e'en,
A strange hot core of fire all palely burned,
A jet of inextinguishable life.
(LOUISE *seats herself again.*)
Surely at some time when she was asleep

She had gone forth upon the dusty road
In a June darkness; and there lost and led
Up hill, down vale, by Morpheus and his train,
She trailed sweet musk that delicately marked
Her unwilled way along oppressive miles.
And in her skirts for ever after stayed
The pollen of that slow-respiring night.
On a hillside she paused — a tranced place where,
As murmuring bees drone o'er the flowered earth,
Midsummer breathed, heavy with redolent odors,
And all the steeped ground gave into the night
A close and ardent sweetness; for the sun
Itself becomes a perfume in the dark,
Changing its beams from gold to frankincense.
Cordia received this essence of the sun,
She has in her the orange light of noon,
Changed to aroma, a mysterious myrrh,
Night fragrances ambrosial, born of fire.

Louise.— Night, says Bernard the saint, is the great light
Of heavenly pleasures; and so speaks love too.

Toinetta.— Listen, I have not ended. Cordia
Was so fatigued, her little heart appeared
A throbbing spot of blood upon her breast
And still they led her, these midsummer dreams,
And she so weary, with her little sides
Beating all soft and warm! And she went on,
Drooping and white, along the fragrant hedges
And moonlit spaces where releasing earth
Breathed the warm odors upward through the trees.
Yet from that night she gained such energy
To spend in love, that, to a lover's gaze,
They say she seems to spill her heart's red blood,
Which still supplies itself. And from that night
She filled herself with sweetness and dark warmth.
Forever now her lips recall slow tears
In their red drooping; and her shadowed eyes
The passionate mournfulness of summer night.
Not with the fate of the ancient wandering Jew
Doomed by the Christ to walk till the world's end,
Does witching night impose its victim's curse;

It but intensifies this life's brief heat,
And bids one burn and burn, a torch of longing.
Thus did the girl return from out that night
Of honeysuckle and wild trumpet-flower
And clematis, to be herself the pale
Exotic tenderness of dusk and flowers,
And breathe forth ardor and excess of sweet!

Louise.— Surely she looks as if some weird event
Had thus estranged her from all other maids.
But I believe her natural and good,
A stranger in our life who should be loved.
They say no one has learned her parentage
And that she came alone into this place.

Toinetta.— The strangers do most harm. Those men who come
With pedigree and kinship form a part
Of a great chain in common-day events.
They are as vessels bound from port to port,
Mounting the sea with pride, for they have cleared,
They sail, and they shall ride into their harbor.
But he or she who comes from God knows where
Has not a port, but child of air and sea
Roams as a pirate, other ships his goal.
Thus strangers make us be their landing-places
Instead of those necessities that rise
As harbors safe for the related man.
Unheralded creep strangers on our path,
And we must put them by, else take them up
As parasites that leech-like suck our lives.

Louise.— Clusa has done this last! I pray that she
May never have a reason to regret.

Toinetta (*rising and going to a window looking seaward*).
O Argentine, calm, good as any youth,
Will ne'er let menace of a stranger grow
To bring to him and Clusa any harm!
They've lit their fire already on the beach.
The twilight comes apace, and we should go.

(*They gather up their work and pass out. The scene opens at the back and shows a fire burning on the sea sand. The girl* CORDIA *is seated alone by the fire, gazing into it. Sound of the sea is heard. There is moonlight on the water.*)

Cordia.— The Two will come. Ah me, always the Two,
Clusa and Argentine, so wills the world.
And with perverseness more perverse than fate
They look upon themselves like men who say
'Tis time to eat, or time to go to sleep.
My heart is dropping, dropping its red light!
(*She makes a movement of trying to draw her drapery about her, and speaks passionately.*)
I cannot hide its beating, cannot bid
This dreadful overflow be staunched, and cease
To drain the current that will spill my strength.
But he — but Argentine has never known!
How I have looked to let him see my heart,
But like a man in mail he seems encased
And gazes on me with unmoving mien!
Oh, how I want his love! How many a time
Have I before him stood, a speechless child,
Until I trembled with my agitation;
And Argentine has never seen at all!
Ever he seems at Clusa to be looking.
They surely have dwelt long upon each other,
These two that men have left unto themselves.
It is the mortal in them holds them so;
Divinity but for a moment breathes
Upon this earth, and that which stays and stays
Proves by stability its limitation.
(ARGENTINE *enters alone.* CORDIA *rises and hastily draws her garment about her, and then she looks at him with long intensity. He meets her eyes, and going to her takes her hand.* CORDIA *says in a half whisper:*)
I want! I want! I want!
Argentine.— Sweet Cordia!
Cordia.— Oh, you have known — have seen!
Argentine.— I do know now.
Cordia.— But now, and not before?
Argentine.— I cannot say.
I seem to see you now for the first time,
As if, when I passed by this place, you stood
As might earth's fairest first revealed to sight.
Cordia (*in a whisper*).— And Clusa there?
Argentine.— I give what's mine to give.
(*He kisses her.*)

Cordia.— Ah, you have come at last to take your own!
For you I've cried the lonely long night through;
But all the day I've seemed to take from you
Fresh courage for this waiting for my love.
Argentine.— Oh, what a palpitating little heart!
Cordia.— It bleeds, it bleeds with every beat, for you.
Argentine.— It still shall beat, but must not bleed again.
I feel it now, throbbing and sobbing there
Within your breast like to a captive bird,
Entangled in a cage of clinging flowers.
With humming wings it vainly tries to fly
To look upon the sweetness where 'tis hid.
O tender flowers, with the bird heart within,
I would release so gently caught a creature
Only that it might see its petaled prison.
Cordia.— Oh, is it certain you love me at last?
Argentine.— I am your heart released! 'Tis I shall cling
About the speechless wonder of the flowers,
And all your perturbation shall with me
Find a deliverance upon your lips.
You are such sweet as your own spirit would sip,
So I will for your hidden self do duty;
I'll be the soul that seeks your trembling mouth,
The heart made free from this too tender cage,
Escaped and resting in its loveliness.
Come, housed and hidden self, sweet prisoner,
Come, timid soul of Cordia, bleeding heart,
I am as you, and now, oh, now at last
I look upon the luxury of life
And breathe the perfume of supernal joy!
My Cordia! dear love!
Cordia.— Here are my lips.
(*She puts her arms about him. After a moment they begin to walk slowly along the beach under the moonlight.*)
Argentine.— As swims the pink of sunrise o'er the sea,
Your body's sweetness is a thing apart,
Divine and luminous, softer than music,
Tearful with stars, pale as the dying moon.
When you appear, I shall be glad for day!
(*They go off.* CLUSA *looking through the bushes sees* ARGENTINE *and*

CORDIA *departing. Wringing her hands and weeping, she moves nervously and with a creeping gait toward the fire. She is followed by* POINETTA.)

Clusa.— Oh, why did not you let me come alone!

Toinetta.— I feared that you might find them, for I saw
Suspicion written in your face and manner.
Dear Clusa, let me comfort you.

Clusa.— Toinetta,
I bade him come without me — God knows why!
(*She seems to listen.*)
What are those little sounds of waves I hear?
They seem in some strange world, for everything
Held Argentine for me. Now that he's gone
Where are my ocean and familiar stars?
Oh, I am far and lost!
(*She takes hold of* TOINETTA.)
Hear, hear, Toinetta,
Those waves like tones of some struck instrument
Fall single, cold, precise with little shocks,
In a remote world's sure, relentless life.
Hark to that roar and that retreating tide —
They are as if another God than mine
Had them made and disposed them to be strange.
Once I knew Argentine when nature voiced
The truth of love! The face of sky and sea,
Instructed of our secret, seemed the book
Of what we both might tell. The quiet rocks
Gave certainty to love, and nature's peace
Revealed the inwardness of our content.
So looking on the ocean could we doubt,
And looking in the sky not find love there?

Toinetta.— O Clusa dear, he will come back to you!
'Tis not your Argentine who thus has wandered.
For we are subject to swift impulses
That wield us like the coming of a storm.
Strange waywardnesses, borne from far,
Play upon us as wind on flame at night.
Whirled to the skies or flattened to the earth
Our little light is helpless to each gust.

Clusa.— Has Argentine no will then of his own?

(MAXIME *enters slowly but without hesitation.*)

Toinetta.— Oh, do you know, Maxime?
Maxime.— Yes, I have seen.
Clusa.— And do you think, you too, he is a reed
That leans this way or that with every tide?
Maxime.— Just as the gods the old Greeks loved and feared
Would roam about in all disguises, Clusa,
Inspiring men to do the Olympian will,
To-day invisible forces still impel
Us to our actions. We are victims yet
Of feelings that subdue and govern us
As if they came from Venus, Jove, or Mars.
We too have an illustrious company
Seated above us to possess our souls,
And gaze upon the earth with the great eyes
Of the immortal gods that fate our deeds.
Strange spirits of adventure shall espouse
Their own in human shape, even as at times
In all of us some power of infinite truth
Shall mould us to an image of a longing!
Forces divine surround us as the sun,
And there are times when through our very nature
They find the springs of action.— Wait, believe!
Clusa (*turning a sad and bewildered face on* MAXIME).
I love him, Maxime, and it seems to me
That we have seen the end of our delight.
Oh, once for us the world's reserve was gone,
And life was kissed by life! Such love was ours
We said each to the other, "This is I!"
And there was light on both of us revealed.
And now a veil has fallen on the earth,
And Argentine denies all that I knew.
Maxime.— We must believe that love must fail at times,
Or else we should neglect to keep it safe.
Because we know love fails or turns aside
We cross life's thousand chances for dismay
With certain rules and judgments for our guidance,
With laws and institutes, to keep the course;
And these firm pilotings will lead to you.
Toinetta.— He will return to you, to find his home.
Maxime.— Love without home is passion all defenceless,

And he who chooses it achieves the hurt
That soldiers get who face the foe unarmed.
And love itself is murdered in the man
Who risks its life, unsworded, unprotected!

Clusa.— Then he can never love again. Ah me!
And I must stay where griefs are numberless
And life is weary, for my soul is wounded
And must forever keep awake, awake!

Maxime.— How little, Clusa, do you know yourself!
You two again shall be life's intimates
Who, reconciled, forgive substantial errors
And love the better for offending love.
Necessity is an external will,
The mind that lives in common things around.
It shall command you two to come together.

Toinetta.— Oh, how I think of you in this great house,
You Two in its red walls, for it is home! —
Here by the sea where you and Argentine
Sit ever with content and loving ways.

Clusa.— Oh, what is more divine than was our love,
Who lived before the world, as we were one!

Maxime.— To me the love of Cordia's more divine.

Clusa and Toinetta (together).— Cordia!

Maxime.— More than love is in her heart,
More than awakes in us to meet the touch
Of wandering earthly beauty. Argentine,
He, he alone, in her full heart abides.
We all have known of love, but what she knows
Makes her afraid to speak the truth of it,
Lest it be laughed at in a world of sense,
And so her ways are skilful, quiet ways,
Of silence, meditation, and wise smiling,
And drooping tenderness that most is sad.

Toinetta.— She seems, 'tis true, the very flame of love,
O'erfilled with its red tide; her soul intense
Within her slender body seems a pulse
That throbs and throbs.

Maxime.— Then since she is all heart
And Argentine has seen its red, it cries
As to the gods cried blood of victims slain.

Clusa.— Oh, who am I to judge him or blame her?
Maxime.— Judge not your own life, nor blame Argentine,
Who yet shall sit beside you and at home!
Toinetta.— And Cordia — what of Cordia?
Maxime.— She must weep.
Toinetta.— Poor child — do you not, Clusa, pity her?
Clusa.— To pity or forgive, one must know sins;
And as there is forgiveness at some time
Made necessary for each one of us,
We all, I think, have sinned that we may love
With gentleness. Oh, yes, I pity her!

(*They all look and see* CORDIA *returning alone, with long soft stride.* MAXIME *and* TOINETTA *go quickly away.* CLUSA *stands transfixed.* CORDIA *comes near the fire, which has now died to embers.*)

Cordia (*to herself*).— My heart is weeping, weeping, at his touch,
With ecstasy more keen than was my longing.
(*She becomes aware of* CLUSA's *presence.*) — Clusa! here!
Clusa.— I forgive you, Cordia,
With all my heart.
Cordia (*after a long pause*).— And I forgive you, Clusa.

ACT III

(LOUISE *and* TOINETTA *in deep mourning are seated on the veranda of the red house.* MAXIME, *looking older, is with them. He is gazing out to sea while the women are at their embroidery. It is afternoon.*)

Toinetta.— All came as you had said, Maxime, except
This end not dreamt by us.
Louise.— This tragedy!
Toinetta.— Was it not beautiful how he came back
And never looked on Cordia again!
Louise.— We had the Two again, the happy Two,
Always together, walking by the sea,
Or in the red house here. He seemed encased
In some conforming armor holding him
In every motion to its silver shape.
Toinetta.— He never even spoke of Cordia.
And she, poor child, so wistfully has gone
About this place as might a ghost bereaved.

Louise.— She haunted Clusa till the fatal end.
Once I remember hearing Clusa say,
Taking her in her arms, that Cordia
Was like a flame which, slight but penetrant,
So small she almost slipt from one's embrace,
Could yet insinuate like tenuous fire
Her golden slimness, till it wrapt and held
Its subtle strength about one and within.
Toinetta.— I once in pity put my arms about her:
It seemed to me, despite her lack of substance,
She was more real and more persuasive too
Than any form or being I had touched.
Louise.— And Argentine had felt this, yet he came
And ever sat by Clusa, saw but her!
Maxime (*taking his hand from his eyes and seeming to answer the last words*).— They sat and stood and moved in this dark house
As creatures lacking knowledge live and move
Perfunctorily in an ordered world.
Reason has instinct blind as any brute's:
Thus does it seem. For reason looking forth
With the preoccupation of the soul
Marks out the way of life as cattle make
A path upon the hills, unknowingly.
Each winding curve that seems a thing thought out,
Made of free will and humanly devised,
That guides between a sweetly running brook
And banks of rose or clumps of juniper,
Is followed by a choice transcending reason.
The feet of souls are sure to find the trail,
Souls' eyes glimpse visions of man's destiny
At every turn. So do men build up virtue
As birds their nests; and as instinctively
Return they always to the common rule
Of good and lawful, as the birds flock south
When winter is upon them. Thus great ends
Reveal themselves in the made ways of life.
God's purposes rule men as well as birds.
Is spirit less cunning and less apt to have
A meaning in its foresight of its needs
Than is the wild beast's instinct when he plays

To sharpen tooth and claw, for ends unguessed? . . .
So he returned to Clusa and obeyed
One of the laws by which men build their souls.

Louise.— The sheep through what a death of forest mark
Their certain path! And sometimes by what ways
Of tender green they plant their little feet
Along the sides of vast and stony uplands!
I've seen them with white fleece upon the slope
Of a great mountain, browsing out their course
'Mid delicate wildness, bleating, calling, passing,
Till curved and hollow between bush and bush
A winding track told of the safe-led flock.

Toinetta.— And sometimes to remind of heaven there come
Visions of beauty as we force our way
Where the soul's instinct leads us on life's course;
For destiny is kind, and many a while
We wander by her bidding near blue seas,
Which toss in such a sunshine that we grow
Enamored of our life. And this was true
Of Argentine and Clusa — they were happy!

Louise.— Then why did Clusa die?

Toinetta.— She had a secret.

Louise.— A secret that had weight to crush her life?

Maxime.— 'Tis often seen, one who conceals the truth
Is overcome as by a stifling air,
As when men breathe the great heat of the south
And, beat upon too heavily by the sky,
Imprisoned far from coolness and free heights,
They die of fervid sunshine and close vapor.
Yet, that to Clusa came this form of doom
I cannot think. We ever can endure
Better the ills we bring upon ourselves
Than those we suffer at another's hands.
She found her death through Cordia.

Toinetta.— You think ——?

Louise.— 'Twas Cordia then who killed her, do you mean?

Toinetta.— Was then this blood upon her heart the guilt
Foreshadowed in its very punishment?
That cannot be!

Maxime.— Have you beheld, in woods,

A sapling that has grown to comeliness
Weaken and wither when another tree
Takes all its share of sun? It vainly seeks
To thrive with foliage and recover strength;
Its leaves untimely yellow and drop off,
And in its youthful hope the sapling dies.
'Tis nature's way. We pity that which dies,
But cannot blame the strong tree that survives.
So too some human lives from others shut
The vital sun and air. The very course
Of Cordia's days was thus a death to Clusa.
No overt act was requisite, no words,
Not even thoughts of least unfriendliness.
Clusa was here and Cordia there; the doom
Of Clusa had no blame or remedy.
'Tis nature's way.

Toinetta.— And Cordia, Maxime,
Is innocent, for Clusa loved her so,
And her own love poured into Clusa's heart
As green-lit sunshine through the lucent leaves
Of little trees that stand beside their sisters.
I know not how it was, they seemed to share
Light that was very vital to them both.
Would there had been enough for Clusa too!

Louise.— But Cordia, though living, suffers so.
Clusa is dead, but Cordia suffers yet.

Toinetta.— 'Tis still that ruddy loss from out her heart.

Louise.— It seems to me as if she had been lured
By some magician having power o'er men,
An artist of inscrutable deep ways
And easy laugh at his experiments,
Into the laboratory where he tries
His sorceries; and there he, speaking runes,
Had, with his face of Mephistopheles,
Touched her poor heart until it oozed its red.
And ever from some hidden source there comes
Into her being power to weep itself.
And yet this wizard or Satanic one
Makes her his own by this unstopt effusion.
Her soul is made his vassal, which he holds

As by a mystic spell that gives her strength
To live so long and die so long in life.
O tender body that can never rest,
Though every breath were an exceeding torment!
So loving, loving, loving she must live,
And living die of unrelievèd love.
This wizard makes her even so his own,
And bending o'er her keeps on her the spell
Till she is tired, as must a mortal be,
Tired with the straining ecstasy of longing.

Toinetta.— Her very cry for mercy comes from love,
And love it is that fills her with unrest,
And makes the wound through which her life grows less.
She walks as one who dreams within love's dusk.
The earth for her is dim, and time is gone,
And her eyes look on things we cannot see.

Maxime.— If time leaves her no measure for brief joy,
What an eternity is in her woe!

Toinetta.— She's coming!

Louise (*to* MAXIME).— To Toinetta she confides
Her heart, and not to us.

Maxime.— Then let us go.

(LOUISE *and* MAXIME *go out, and* CORDIA *comes from the house to the verandah.*)

Cordia.— Toinetta, I have wandered by the sea,
And generous and mild its bosom breathed
Of hope and peace and strength. I know to-night
There will be stars and moon.— If he would go!

Toinetta.— Who go, and where?

Cordia.— Into the garden, oh,
If Argentine would go!

Toinetta.— What garden, then?

Cordia.— The garden of love — it is so wonderful!
That place we enter with our sandals off,
And there we are accompanied with all
That man holds good. That garden we come to
When we are fit, for 'tis most beautiful
Of all the realms of life.

Toinetta.— Have you been there?

Cordia.— I cannot go alone; but I have brushed

The coping of its walls and felt the soft
Green moss that creeping covers them with peace.
And at a place I once peered o'er the walls,
And what I saw was like a miracle.

Toinetta.— If you should tell him would he not then go?
Ah, Argentine comes — tell him of the garden!

Cordia.— Kiss me, Toinetta. You seem nearest her,
Clusa, I mean.

(TOINETTA *kisses* CORDIA *and moves away.* ARGENTINE *comes up the path from the sea.* CORDIA *whispers:*)
What shall this hour bring forth?
(*Then to* ARGENTINE). —I still think of the garden, Argentine.

Argentine.— Again the garden! Well, I listen now,
But will not look to see where your quick heart
Still seems to drip the red of your atonement
For Clusa's death!

Cordia (*putting up her arms as if to ward off a blow*).—
Oh, spare me from those words!
You plunge me to the misery of such grief
That in the gloomy dungeon of despair
I seem to seek and grope and cry for light!
Unless your hand shall lead me to the day
Wherein the garden blows, I die in darkness.

Argentine.— How could we gain this garden, Cordia?

Cordia (*looking ahead with a smile on her lips and a light in her eyes*).—
The glory of the morn is in the east —
It beckons to us from the sky's gold gates!
We'll follow that blue path unto the day,
And clothed with brightness we shall lift our heads!
The great sea streams unto this garden lead,
Their current is drawn on by magnet love,
Their strength is the forgiveness of our sins.
Ah, when I sail that sea will you not be
Before me on the shore, and cry to me:
" I too can love! The winds deceived my sails,
But now I hear the voice of love again,
And we will rise and go into the garden."

Argentine (*with confusion*).— And what have I to bring but my mistakes
And my distress and sorrow, Cordia?

Cordia.— Oh, there the wind dispels the yesterdays!
It blows with present courage and stores power
To sweep away all burden of the past.
And in this freedom, oh, our lives will know
A new and final grace, a flawless joy.
Argentine.— How difficult the way unto this garden!
Cordia.— Is it so hard? If so, 'tis worth a price! —
This garden has a fountain, Argentine,
Which springs forth from the heaviness of earth —
It gushes from the depths of her — and yet
How free it leaps and rises to the sky,
And gathers stars to gem its flying spray;
How white it is, how delicate, and then
How by its side it holds the rainbow's hues!
Still does the earthly clay-gap send it forth
Into the sunshine or the odorous night,
And purple flowers and herbs of spicy breath
Welcome the wonder of its loveliness!
But to behold this fount and drink of it
One must have love that like a mighty tree
Waves far aloft its plumes, and therefore needs
Must have a root of depth unshakable.
Argentine.— Some sanction of all life must enter there
And we must wait until divinely free,
Unheld of law or conscience, we can go.
For in a love so holy all our being
Must find acceptance, be acceptable.
Cordia.— But is not this the hour, if you do love me?
This garden is, where the elect go in,
Fulfilment of all life, and heaven's image.
What now of best that lies without, within,
Forbids we have love's high experience?
Shall we not go where springs the eternal fount?
Argentine.— O Cordia! In this home my roots are planted,
In that Idea which through all my days
Shall be my soul. And as a spirit haunts
The walls of a familiar habitation,
Myself must haunt this spot that I hold dearest,
This seat of love, this definite red house,
This center of the world, this parent source

Of life itself, the root of the world plant.
We know not what the essence is of life,
But know well that its issue is of love,
Of love, that as the sun unto the earth,
Is vital warmth to every good that is —
To duty and to sacrifice, to law,
To service and to kindness and to strength.
Having our homes we all may come and go
As hurried with the variousness of will,
Now to, now from, this hearthstone of our lives,
But ever love sits here with her calm law,
Old and supreme, serene and sure as fate,
Ordering from these rooms, where she abides
With large and lustrous eyes, our wandering souls,
That we breathe still the air of a sweet life.
And I have seen love's folded great wings here,
Her heavenly pinions settling in this house,
Strong as with light and peace immutable,
Quivering with life and mobile as the sea,
And here she sat, a presence to be worshipped.

Cordia.— One time before, I heard you talk like this.
Now o'er me breaks the sound of your loved voice
As from a wide-winged cloud the sweet shower falls.
I seem rained on by words that have rich pictures,
As though in every rounded drop that fell
I could behold the motion of fair forms,
Visions of gleaming sails and far white birds!

Argentine.— And looking down, behold I see my shrine.
Your hair is spread about you as the fringe
The cypress waves from its outreaching branches,
And you are slim and drooping like the tree.

Cordia.— And shedding drops of red blood as the tree,
This cypress did, in Italy long ago!
Once when I, wandering and lost, stood still
I thought I was a tree in woods at night,
And now again I see the dark of woods,
The loneliness of some enchanted hour.

Argentine.— 'Tis but the loneliness of sleep, dear heart.

Cordia.— Do you not see how all my boughs are shaken
And how the red is crimsoning my side?

Argentine.— I see an aureole round you, Cordia,

For in you, like a light in cloud, is love,
And its beams cast a halo from your spirit!

(*She shivers.* ARGENTINE *settles her deep in the cushions. He leans over her and takes her hand.*)

Argentine.— Do you remember, Cordia, that tree
I told you of, close by the tomb of Cyrus?

Cordia.— That bleeding cypress tree in Italy?

Argentine.— Yes, Cordia. For often I think how you
Are like this tree the traveler tells us of:
How it was made a shrine and pilgrims came
And said the bleeding was a miracle.
Long have you been a shrine, dear Cordia,
Where I've hung little lamps of my devotion.
I am the pilgrim, and you seem most holy,
And all your pain of heart a miracle
Of matchless love!

Cordia (*scarcely heard*).— This now, when I must die!

Argentine (*entreatingly*).— I come to you, believing and devout,
To you, my shrine.

Cordia.— Your crimsoned cypress tree!

Argentine.— Under the shelter of its boughs to rest
And consecrate it as my oratory.
And to this home of love I must devote
All that is left me of my lapsing life.
For I, who came so near offending home,
Feel how I owe unto its very dwelling
Life's poor reminder — all my loving care,
My constant tendance and my reverence.
Here shall I dwell, as one held in a sea
He could not ride, counting its million gems
And glorying in its depths that sink so far
Beneath the day in all their power and strangeness.
So here as with a spirit I shall stay.
And live a little without joy and die.

Cordia.— Oh, then for us to go together there
Into our garden — it is not the hour!
Dear Argentine, my heart bleeds. O my heart!

(CORDIA *suddenly gathers her gown over her heart and is about to fall, when* ARGENTINE *reaches out his arms to hold her. She droops white and still. He sees the spot of red upon her breast. He leads her tenderly to a*

cushioned seat, and bends above her. CORDIA *sighs out these words and leans her face up nearer his.*)

Now it will bleed my life away at last.
Oh, I am cold — how chill the evening grows.

(CORDIA, *rising a little, looks deeply into* ARGENTINE'S *eyes, then slowly her head sinks upon his shoulder, and her hand clutches at her heart.*)

Cordia. — I see a garden more remote than love's,
And for our own the hour can never come!

(*She dies.*)

THE CODICIL

(A comedy in one act)

By Paul Ferrier

Translated by Elizabeth Lester Mullin

CHARACTERS

Marie de Chantenay, a widow.
Gaston de Morières, her lover.
Pitou, a gardener.
Pontgouin, a notary.

Scene: *Château de Chantenay, Poitou, France.* Time: *The present.*

Scene I

A drawing-room. Enter Pontgouin *and* Marie de Chantenay.

Marie.— Why do I remain a widow? Because men are so conceited, so absolutely selfish that marriage has become nothing more than a speculation. Beauty, wit, and heart count as nothing in their estimation and cannot balance the weight of a dowery. There is not one among them, not a single one, I say, who has love, generosity, or chivalry enough to encumber himself with a wife without a fortune.

Pontgouin.— A Malabar widow — through misanthropy.

Marie.— Malabar — minus the funeral pile.

Pontgouin.— You are a dreadful sceptic.

Marie.— Whose fault is it? The fitful changes of life have in a few years allowed me to go through a double experience. As a young girl in sad need of a dowery I ran the risk of becoming an old maid. But as a widow, endowed with the fortune M. de Chantenay has left me, that is quite another thing. I personally have worked out the rule and now see it verified. What a contrast! This time the suitors fairly spring out of the ground and I cannot take a step without stumbling over a proposal.

Pontgouin.— Who assures you that they are all so interested?

Marie.— Who assures me? A test, whimsical, perhaps, but conclusive, by which I regularly try each of my lovers!

Pontgouin.— And that test?

Marie.— You are not in the ranks, my friend, so I can tell you. M. de Chantenay by his will bequeathed me his fortune absolutely, but I have imagined a codicil that will deprive me of it. You understand — this is the game! He proposes. Usual formula. I reply in an incredulous tone.— "Yes, you may swear that you love me, yet how am I to know that you love none but me?" (He), "I love any but you! What woman could contend against such charms, such grace, such fascination?"— Then I become more explicit. "If I could feel sure that you love me for myself alone"— (He), "I not love you for yourself, Madame, I who adore your every feature. Your beauty, your hair, your brow, your soul that reflects ——" I sigh. "Then I need no longer fear to make you a revelation that might cool a less ardent devotion."— (He), "You have a revelation to make me?"— Here the voice of the lover trembles, though love plays small part in that tremor. I hasten to explain — "Oh, reassure yourself, that revelation has nothing to do with my honor, nor with anything you love in me. It only refers to some miserable financial details." The countenance of the adorer darkens. I continue — "By his will M. de Chantenay left me his fortune unconditionally."— Unconditionally, at that word the lover's brow regains its serenity — "But there is a codicil attached, a codicil which reads"— Clouds gather once more — "In case Madame de Chantenay should contract a second marriage my will becomes null and void and my property in its entirety shall revert to my nephew, my sole natural heir."— Then the face of my wooer expresses stupor in its most aggravated form — "But you love me for myself, my hair, my brow, my every feature." Oh, how ridiculous they appear protesting, stammering, and finally beating a retreat. And they never come back again. Never! Wretched men! It is such a farce. But you are not laughing —?

Pontgouin.— I am thinking of a case that might present itself.

Marie.— Let's have it.

Pontgouin.— If you chanced to meet a man, a paladin, who would come out of the test triumphant ——

Marie.— He will never be met.

Pontgouin. — Still admit the hypothesis.

Marie.— He would not be of this century and that very circumstance might lessen the desirability of the match.

Pontgouin.— Not necessarily.

Marie.— He would have to be an Arcadian Shepherd.

Pontgouin.— But you would marry him?

Marie.— You lay great stress upon my marrying.

Pontgouin.— I am greatly in favor of it.

Marie.— What did I ever do to you?

Enter Pitou.— Madame de Chantenay, the Sub-Prefect asks for you.

Pontgouin.— One of your admirers?

Marie.— Yes, for a week he has been beating about the bush. Will you bet on him?

Pontgouin.— Oh, no.

Marie.— You are prudent. However, you need not go far. He will not be long.

Pontgouin.— A farce?

Marie.— Always the same with the invariable conclusion.

(*Exit.*)

Scene II

Pontgouin, Pitou

Pontgouin.— I would not bet on the Sub-Prefect, but I would bet on Gaston de Morières (*he hesitates*), I will bet— hey!— hey! Should I bet? Gaston is a noble fellow and generous too, yet to see an income of thirty thousand francs suddenly vanish under your very eyes is enough to knock the breath out of you. You are taken unawares and feel the full strength of the blow. (*He is struck with an idea.*) I will bet on a certainty. A word to the wise is sufficient. I will warn Gaston. (*He writes*) Courage, my friend, go ahead and propose. That story of the codicil is all an invention. Don't you believe it. There is no codicil. Only feign to believe it and victory is yours.

Pitou (*advances*).— M. Pontgouin, since you are here you had better take a look at the espaliers.

Pontgouin.— Why should I, Pitou? I am not a gardener.

Pitou.— Quite true, sir, but you are a lawyer, and can tell if a neighbor has any right to let his wall tumble down on Madame de Chantenay's fruit.

Pontgouin.— Always something the matter with your neighbors' wall.

Pitou.— M. Pontgouin, you know M. de Morières and could persuade him to have his wall repaired. If Madame de Chantenay would only listen to me she would sue him.

Pontgouin.— I would not think of doing that, Pitou, until I had tried conciliatory measures first.

Pitou.— You hope to conciliate?

Pontgouin.— It was with just such a hope that I had written to M. de Morières. Will you take the letter to him?

Pitou (*taking the letter*).— Did you put in it that only last night two rocks fell down and crushed seventeen fine Duchess pears?

Pontgouin.— Yes, I told him what he had to expect.

Pitou.— A marmalade of seventeen pears! Pshaw! If he knows what's right he'll have his old wall fixed up.

(*Exit.*)

Scene III

Pontgouin.— I have an idea that he will arrange to have it pulled down so as to unite the two estates. Then this will be the finest tract of land in Poitou. Ah! Well, since he is in love with Madame de Chantenay he can act the Arcadian Shepherd and maybe she will marry him. Here she comes. She is laughing. The government official has evidently been ousted.

Marie (*enters laughing*).— *E finita la commedia!*

Pontgouin.— The Sub-Prefect?

Marie.— He has flown as fast as he could. You will see that he asks to be transferred.

Pontgouin (*seeing* Pitou *enter*).— Pitou, already? (*He makes a sign, says in an undertone*), Sh, — You have not delivered my letter?

Pitou.— On the contrary, I put it into M. de Morières own hand. I met him coming here.

Pontgouin (*aside*).— Good for me! I was just in time. We will clear the field. Come along, Pitou. (*Perceiving that* Marie *is watching them.*) Yes, Madame, we are thinking of bringing action against your neighbor. Show me the way, Pitou, and let us have a look into these damages.

(*Exeunt.*)

Scene IV

Marie.— A suit against M. de Morières? Oh, Pitou is such a savage! M. de Morières, the only one of my neighbors who has never courted me. Never. Is it indifference or timidity? It would be ridiculous for him to do it now after so many others. After the Sub-Prefect, for instance. (*She laughs.*)

Gaston *enters*

Gaston.— You are in a gay mood to-day.

Marie.— M. de Morières! I am glad to see you.

Gaston.— Are you not going to laugh any more?

Marie.— No, it is all over.

Gaston.— So much the worse. Your laugh is clear and sweet as any chime. I love to hear you laugh.

Marie.— Then it is a question of sound?

Gaston.— Have you begun to tease already?

Marie.— No, but you spoke as a lover of music.

Gaston.— That is because I dare not tell you that I am a lover of another kind.

Marie.— Now, my friend, no nonsense.

Gaston.— I know you do not like it. Yet, you ought to be particularly indulgent to a — neighbor who has come to say farewell.

Marie.— Farewell? Are you going away?

Gaston.— This evening.

Marie.— That means you are off on a hunt?

Gaston.— Yes, to the jungles of India, after the tiger.

Marie.— You are not serious?

Gaston.— About the tiger? Certainly. Also of my plans. I have often spoken to you of Roger de Montluel.

Marie.— Your friend who has been three times around the world?

Gaston.— Yes, and this time he has taken it into his head to have me go with him.

Marie.— Ah! If that is the case, it is time I should stop laughing.

Gaston.— Really?

Marie.— Am I not going to lose a friend?

Gaston.— Yes, a — friend.

Marie.— You don't seem to be any too sure.

Gaston.— Of course I am.

Marie.— Are you, indeed! Let me see. You are my country neighbor. In the country it is quite the proper thing for neighbors to go to law. The occasion is not lacking, M. de Morières.

Gaston.— It is a clear fact that that beastly drain of yours ——

Marie.— I advise you to complain, you whose boundary walls are daily tumbling down upon my espaliers.

Gaston.— I shall leave orders to have them repaired. You say it is the proper thing for neighbors to go to law?

Marie.— That does not apply to a case like ours where difficulties can be solved by friendship.

Gaston.— Nothing else?

Marie.— Nothing else.

Gaston.— You see no other alternative?

Marie.— Say rather that I wish to see none.

Gaston.— Very well! But as far as I can see these neighborly relations need not exclude an attachment of a deeper and more intimate nature than mere friendship.

Marie. Again? M. de Morières, I have never known you as disagreeable as you are to-day.

Gaston.— I have not had the chance so far, but I had promised myself to be more than agreeable.

Marie.— So as to add keenness to my regrets at parting? You were unkind to make such a resolution.

Gaston.— I was about to observe ——

Marie.— You were about to observe — Come, come, M. de Morières, we have had enough of nonsense, let us speak plainly. Ever since my arrival at Chantenay, a year ago ——

Gaston.— A year already!

Marie.— Oh, spare me such exclamations. For a year, then, we have kept up these neighborly relations under the semblance of friendship.

Gaston.— The resemblance is indeed striking. My chateau is within two gunshots of yours and your grounds run into mine. I am very thankful for this proximity and am indebted to it for the water that your drain continually backs into my cellars.

Marie.— And I to your crumbling walls for the stones that crush my finest fruits. But our object is not to discuss the annoyances arising from bordering estates. Allow me to continue.

Gaston.— I am all attention.

Marie.— In consequence of some interchange of seeds, principally for the kitchen garden ——

Gaston.— Those white melon seeds! I will never forget them as long as I live.

Marie.— In consequence of the interchange of some melon seeds ——

Gaston.— *White.* They were white melon seeds.

Marie.— Well, then, *white* melon seeds, you paid me a visit.

Gaston.— Ha, ha! I can still see myself, how I brought you, first, buds from my rose bushes, then roses from my buds — so you might judge for yourself.

Marie.— And I accepted those roses and buds and later a basket of game.

Gaston.— A hare, three pheasants, and seven quails.

Marie.— I remember it.

Gaston.— I shall remember it eternally.

Marie.— Then followed other seeds, other roses, other baskets of game, and a number of calls.

Gaston.— A hundred and eleven.

Marie.— A hundred and eleven!

Gaston.— I kept count of them. It seems quite a number in a year. Yet between neighbors in the country ——

Marie.— In short, by degrees we became inseparable. I found you frank and a genial comrade. Certainly nothing in your manner or conversation warranted me in doubting the sincerity of a friendship which I naturally returned.

Gaston.— Oh, I see what you are driving at now.

Marie.— Ah, indeed!

Gaston.— Yes. Would you like me to finish it for you? "You came as a friend, you were received as a friend. If you change your role ——"

Marie.— In that case, my friend — But why discuss it when you are leaving for the Indies?

Gaston.— Yes, I am glad to say that I am going to the Indies, although the Indies are scarcely far enough to suit me. To remain here and continue this role of friendship would be utterly impossible. For three months I have struggled to throw off the mask, but refrained through fear of displeasing you. The emotion of parting has at least given me courage to speak.

Marie.— Stop, M. de Morières. Not another word. You are going too far.

Gaston.— Is it going too far to say that I love you?

Marie.— And he too!

Gaston.— Yes, I love you, and whatever comes of it I congratulate myself for having dared to tell you so. Now you may dismiss me, prohibit my coming, withdraw your friendship, etc., etc. I will barely add that I am thirty, in sound health, and can offer you a spotless name and an ample fortune. There is nothing in my proposal to offend, even if, alas, there is nothing to flatter you. Only allow me to call you Madame de Morières and I promise you on my honor never to cause a shadow of sadness to darken those bright features that I so dearly love.

Marie (*aside*).—Behold! Still another plunges in.

Gaston.— Have you nothing to say to me?

Marie.— I do not doubt your sincerity, M. de Morières, and I will tell you candidly that your proposal surprises but in no sense offends me. I am a widow, my own mistress, therefore you come directly to me to ask for my hand. I would not be a woman if I took offense at a sincere love sincerely expressed.

Gaston.— You were not shocked at my abruptness?

Marie.— Not at all. It is your nature and I do not dislike men of your nature. However, to be absolutely true, I must confess there is a tinge of resentment to my surprise. You see, I was accustomed to view you solely as a friend, now your proposal changes the aspect of things and I find myself somewhat confused. You had never courted me and consequently I never questioned myself about you. Things have taken a grave turn, M. de Morières, and I must ask a few days for consideration.

Gaston.— Do not refuse immediately. I will withdraw, already feeling less despondent than when I came.

Marie.— One moment! I believe in your sincerity. I am sure that you love me and that you love none but me.

Gaston.— You, you alone. Your beauty, your grace, your distinction.

Marie (*aside*).— Naturally! (*Aloud.*) Then, I fear no longer to make you a revelation that might cool a less passionate devotion.

Gaston.— You have a revelation to make me?

Marie (*aside*).— His voice trembles.

Gaston (*aside*).— Could M. de Chantenay have imposed any conditions?

Marie.— Reassure yourself. The revelation has nothing to do with my honor nor with my dignity nor with anything you love in me.

Gaston.— I could have vouched for that.

Marie.— It only refers to some miserable financial details. (*Aside.*) His brow does not even darken.

Gaston.— Miserable, indeed! But we will not bother about them. That's a lawyer's business, as the saying is.

Marie (*aside*).— Such disinterestedness!

Gaston.— You certainly cannot do me the injustice to think that your fortune could influence my suit?

Marie (*aside*).— He affects the brave.

Gaston.— On my honor, if you had no lands, nor stocks, nor even a jewel, it would make no difference, I should love you all the better.

Marie.— Surely you would not wish me to be ——

Gaston.— Penniless. Rudely speaking, then, I might have some chance.

Marie.— Well, my friend, you have your wish.

Gaston.— Indeed!

Marie (*aside*).— He didn't even wince!

Gaston.— And your fortune?

Marie.— I possess wholly through M. de Chantenay.

Gaston.— The family, I suppose, intend to contest the will?

Marie.— Not at all. It is incontestable.

Gaston.— Well, what then?

Marie.— There is a codicil.

Gaston.— Oh, I can guess the contents of the codicil. In case of second marriage —— ?

Marie.— M. de Chantenay wished to leave that opening for the benefit of his collateral heirs.

Gaston.— What will you lose by marrying again?

Marie.— An income of thirty thousand francs.

Gaston.— I have fifty. I do not intend to boast of the difference, yet inasmuch as it does away with all fear of impoverishing you I feel warranted in pleading that you consent to an exchange which, unless objectionable to you, would assure my happiness.

Marie.— You persist?

Gaston.— I persist without any misgivings of the future. In the first place, you will have to make the same sacrifice for whomsoever you choose. Proud indeed should I be if you would make me the man, and I think I may pretend to be as worthy as a good many others.

Marie.— You, my friend, you are the best of men, the most generous.

Gaston.— That will do, that will do. Don't offer me sugar-coated pills. Only take to heart this one truth, that I love you. Think it over. Marry me. Leave Chantenay for Morières. You have but a step to take, but a little stream to cross. À propos of that stream, we will greet the new incumbents of Chantenay with a lawsuit as soon as they take possession. Be compassionate, Madame, reflect upon my proposal and decide as soon as possible. Then dispatch me word to Morières, where I now go in a fever of anxiety to await your answer.

Marie.— Why are you in such a hurry?

Gaston.— Why? Because the sooner you begin to reflect the sooner you will come to some decision.

Marie.— I can think just as well in your presence. Unless you are afraid it might augment your fever, I would offer you some dinner.

Gaston.— I will be poor company, but most happy to accept.

Marie.— I will give the necessary orders. You need not worry. There will be no extra preparations, for it is known that lovers live on little.

Gaston.— Do not mock me. It is true that I love you with all my heart and only ask the chance to prove it.

(MARIE *gives him her hand as she leaves the stage. He gladly seizes it and detains her. They exchange glances.*)

Marie (*aside*).— Ah! Indeed, I should have been truly grieved if he had not proved better than the others. (*Exit.*)

Scene V

Gaston (sighs).— Heavens! how I sigh. Yet, there is no sin in sighing. I sigh because I am in love and I love like a — no — I do not want to say, like a fool, on her account. I love, let me see, I love like a man of thirty who knows the charms and deceptions of life, and who says to himself when he meets the woman in the world who realizes his fondest dreams, 'Now, then, now, then, if I should not displease Madame de Chantenay, Madame de Chantenay would suit me marvelously.' No romantic introduction, no sudden emotion, no electric thrills. Talk to me rather of love that is founded on congenial tastes and fortune. Such a love is warranted not to fade with time. It does not blaze up as ignited straw only to end in a handful of ashes. It has its gradations, first Madame de Chantenay pleased me, then she charmed me, and finally bewitched me — yes, bewitched me. And to think that for three months I concealed my love under the guise of friendship. Ah, I was right to screw my up courage! A courage that took me by surprise. Upon my honor I came here intending to do nothing more than say good by. I was half off to India and maybe farther for all I know. Now, I think of it, what did I do with Pontgouin's letter? We have a common notary. He will draw up the contract. (*Finding a letter.*) No, that is Roger's. By the way, Roger is expecting me and I had forgotten all about him. (*He looks at his watch.*) Five o'clock, I have barely time to run home and send a telegram to let my traveling companion know that I have given up the trip — detained by a — hope.

(*Exit.*)

Scene VI

Marie, Pontgouin

Marie.— No, no, M. Pontgouin, that will do, I beg of you.

Pontgouin.— But Madame de Chantenay ——

Marie.— It is useless. I do not blame you. You thought that friendship would justify such perfidy. That excuses you in some degree, but as for M. de Morières, do not try to defend him.

Pontgouin.— You make it seem worse than it actually is.

Marie.— Perhaps it is because I held him in such esteem that his fall seems all the greater. I was foolishly taken in by his protests of chivalry. I am angry with him for two reasons, for having assumed the role of Don Quixote and for having played it so cheaply.

Pontgouin.— You make me bitterly regret ——

Marie.— Regret what? Having doubted his disinterestedness so far as to put him on his guard, or for having confessed to me your treason? The latter absolves you from the former.

Pontgouin.— But the latter was involuntary. You forced my admission so dexterously ——

Marie.— Merely by chance. If it had not been for Pitou's indiscretion, who, in his innocence, informed me that he had just delivered a letter from you to M. de Morières.

Pontgouin.— Pitou is an idiot! But didn't you allege what was false in order to get the truth out of me?

Marie.— That was fair play.

Pontgouin.— Yes, in a criminal prosecution against a felon, but against an inoffensive notary. "That was a clever ruse of yours," you said, "to have warned your friend. He has loyally confessed the whole affair and shown me your letter," and you were laughing as you said it, so that I fell into your trap. Awkward fool! When I had made my confession, you stopped laughing, and then I realized that through my stupidity I had ruined poor de Morières.

Marie.— Console yourself, you have saved me.

Pontgouin.— Saved?

Marie.— Yes, from the greatest misery. From the misfortune of having to regard with contempt the man I should have married. Here he comes. Will you leave us, M. Pontgouin?

Pontgouin.— What, you are going to make him undergo ——

Marie.— A cross-examination.

Pontgouin.— And if he should deny?

Marie.— Do you think he will deny to the end?

Pontgouin.— No. But I think there is a gap in our Judicial System. Women ought to be made prosecuting attorneys.

(*Exit.*)

Scene VII

Marie, Gaston

Marie.— Well, Neighbor, are you still here?

Gaston.— Still?

Marie.— I thought you had gone.

Gaston.— I went home for a minute to send a dispatch to Montluel.

Marie.— Your traveling companion?

Gaston.— My ex-companion. Think of my forsaking him.

Marie.— Why, have you given up your trip round the world?

Gaston.— Am I not right to believe that there is no longer any reason why I should take such a journey?

Marie.— Are you quite sure?

Gaston.— You encouraged me to hope ——

Marie.— To hope for little ——

Gaston.— Yes; But ——

Marie.— You will admit there was no engagement?

Gaston.— No, I asked you to consider ——

Marie.— And I have considered.

Gaston.— Why, how strangely you say that?

Marie.— I have thought it out to its bitter end.

Gaston.— I beg of you ——

Marie.— I came to the conclusion, if you will allow me to be frank, that there was a little too much lightness in your character, a carelessness about your own interests, and a scorn for the material things of life that I should be distressed to encounter in my future husband.

Gaston.— I do not quite understand ——

Marie.— At least, I thought that this levity, this indifference, this great disdain must come from some secret cause I knew nothing about.

Gaston.— I am still in the dark.

Marie.— Nevertheless, it is very clear, M. de Morières, and my reflections have brought me to the conclusion that you are either frightfully light or even more artful.

Gaston.— If these little quarrels have no other end than to test my disposition, quarrel away, Madame, you will find me as gentle as a lamb.

Marie.— Yes, I understand you are armed against all tests.

Gaston.— I am armed?

Marie.— In full armor. Against which the news of my poverty made not a dint of impression.

Gaston.— Very natural, was it not?

Marie.— On the contrary, it was very astonishing. As if it were of no importance, as if you could have foreseen ——

Gaston.— As if it were of no importance. Certainly.

Marie.— That you had not foreseen.

Gaston.— No.

Marie.— For which you were not at all prepared?

Gaston.— Why, how could I have been?

Marie.— Such innocence! You know my notary, M. Pontgouin?

Gaston.— Very well. He is a great friend of mine.

Marie.— Against such a friend you would not commit the least indiscretion?

Gaston.— What do you mean?

Marie.— I mean this. M. de Chantenay's will was deposited in the care of M. Pontgouin. Did he never in his conversation with you allude to the clauses of that will or to the codicil?

Gaston.— Pontgouin has never spoken of it.

Marie.— Nor written?

Gaston.— Still less.

Marie.— Now I have made up my mind, M. de Morières, that it is not carelessness you are guilty of, but dissimulation.

Gaston.— Pray, what does this mean?

Marie.— Oh! Do not inquire, do not feign to inquire. You have deceived me. It is easy to make a show of generosity when the display costs you so little. Happily, Providence intervened at the right moment to expose the imposture which was unworthy of a gentleman.

Gaston.— Great heavens, Madame! I am led into a maze of astonishment, I swear that I am. Pray, be explicit.

Marie.— You wish it? Very well, I will then tell you that I know everything. Do you understand? Everything.

Gaston.— It is an advantage you have over me, for I know nothing— will you understand? Nothing.

Marie.— Nothing? You do not know what was in that letter of M. Pontgouin's that my gardener just delivered to you?

Gaston.— Pontgouin's letter. I never even looked at it.

Marie (*quickly changes her voice*).— Truly. (*He takes the letter from his pocket and holds it towards her. She seizes it with both hands.*)

Gaston.— No, I thought it was about those boundary walls, you know. Pitou handed it to me with such a triumphant smile and said: "Maybe M. de Morières will stop crushing Duchess pears."

Marie.— You have never opened this letter.

Gaston.— Remember, I had other troubles at heart. But since it has aroused your suspicions, it is very easy. (*He takes it to break the seal.*)

Marie.— No, no, don't open it. I beg of you.

Gaston.— Why not? I am curious to know what you accuse me of.

Marie.— I accuse you no longer.

Gaston.— Then my innocence is established?

Marie.— On the contrary, I ask your pardon for having for a moment doubted your loyalty, your nobleness, your ——

Gaston.— Yes, you doubted me. I am entitled to a very great compensation, Madame.

Marie.— Do you think it is in my power to give it to you?

Gaston.— It requires only your good will.

Marie.— We will discuss it later. Come, give me your arm.

Gaston.— For dinner?

Marie.— Yes, M. Pontgouin awaits us in the dining-room.

Gaston.— Pontgouin! Is he there?

Marie.— I retained him, thinking he would confound you.

Gaston.— In reference to that letter? What could it have contained?

Marie.— He will tell you. It is within his province.

Gaston.— We will go, but, if it is just the same to him, he had better come to-morrow.

Marie.— Will his presence annoy you?

Gaston.— Oh, bother! He will rob me of my tête a tête.

Marie.— Not at all. Not at all, you shall have it *before the notary.*

TWO HUSBANDS

By Henri Lavedan

Translated from the French by R. T. House

CHARACTERS

Pierre de Nisse. Thirty-three years. Poet.
Jacques Duroux. Thirty-eight years. Gentleman of leisure.

Scene: *in the home of* DeNisse. *He is alone, seated in his study, when* Duroux *enters.*)

Duroux.— You? A poet; you consent? Where is your wife?

DeNisse.— She's roaming about. She gone's out. Don't talk about her, I can't digest her.

Duroux.— Oh!

DeNisse.— She lies heavy on my stomach.

Duroux.— You mean on your heart. Everybody knows you married for love, and you did well to love so beautiful a woman.

DeNisse.— She's pretty, that's true. But I'd like her better if her face were not such a perfect oval, if her features weren't so regular, and she had a little more brain.

Duroux.— Shocking! And you call yourself a poet.

DeNisse.— Yes, I call myself a poet. She might just as well be the wife of somebody else, a nobody, an engineer, a colonel. She isn't the wife for Pierre de Nisse, author of "Morning Sobs," "The Ivory Quiver," "Severed Veins."

Duroux.— And "The Laughing Willow."

DeNisse.— And "Turquoisette."

Duroux.— And so forth, and so forth. What kind of a wife do you want?

DeNisse.— The Muse.

Duroux.— Rats! Don't you know that the Muse gets to be a dreadful bore if you keep steady company with her?

DeNisse (*is not listening. Sadly, bitterly, despairingly*). — I should not have objected, I admit, to a being who would have sat for hours opposite me, looking at me in silence, with her eyes gazing into mine, her finger raised like a sibyl, or one who by a furtive electric pressing of her tiny foot would have sent her soul into mine, one with whom I could have talked without restriction of the moon, of Sirius, of the Gemini, one who would

have wept every time a dead leaf fell, one who would have fainted at the divine odor of syringa blossoms — gnashing her teeth ——

Duroux.— Well, well! What else?

DeNisse.— Oh, lots of things! I can't tell all she should have been — the wife dreamed of in my dreams!

Duroux.— Yes, you should have had one made to measure under your supervision.

DeNisse.— And yet I'm not hard to please. I'm unlucky, that's all.

Duroux.— Come, now! Don't get maudlin. So Mme. de Nisse doesn't answer these — these modest requirements!

DeNisse (*raising his eyes and his hands*).— No sarcasm, please. She's — oh, she's nothing! I can't describe her.

Duroux. — A bourgeoise?

DeNisse.— Less than that. A bourgeoise may have the gracious breadth of a Chardin. There is poetry in a boiling pot ——

Duroux.— At least they begin with the same letter.

DeNisse. — Yes. I tell you my wife is nothing, less than nothing. She's a subnothing. She doesn't understand.

Duroux.— Does she try to?

DeNisse.— No. What good would it do if she did? She couldn't.

Duroux. — No, I suppose not.

DeNisse.— Well, then? I don't blame her, but I suffer and my soul is seared. She's frivolous, inconsistent, insignificant. She's poor in ideas.

Duroux.— When she's *decolleté* she's certainly rich in views.

DeNisse. — Yes, the exterior is agreeable, but the soul doesn't harmonize. She has scarcely ear enough to distinguish prose from verse. Her little mind can do nothing but occupy itself with the care of my health, the management of the house. She can talk only of indifferent things, of the servants, of her birds, of her family. I'm going to make you an awful confession. My poetry puts her to sleep!

Duroux.— Oh!

DeNisse. — She has no love for my art.

Duroux. — But she loves *you*.

DeNisse.— Of course; but I'd rather have a nose she didn't like and have her appreciate my talent.

Duroux.— In that case she would never have married you.

DeNisse.— Yes, she would. But in place of foolishly loving me for my sea-green eyes, the Cupid's bow of my smile, or the romantic nonchalance of my expression, she would have chosen me for weightier and loftier reasons,

she would have been truly the sister of my thought. Yes, I was thinking it all over when you came in a moment ago. I am alone in life, on a solitary rock, with a beautiful low-browed Eve at my side. Pity me, my friend, pity me.

Duroux.— No.

DeNisse.— There you are! Selfish and pitiless! Because you've fared well, because you had the good luck to get hold of the ideal woman, the ideal of the artist and the thinker ——

Duroux.— That's enough! Do you want her?

DeNisse.— What!

Duroux.— Yes! Who wants her? I won't sell her. I'll give her away, for nothing. The ideal of the thinker. It's plain enough that you don't know her. I've got her! Well ——

DeNisse.— But you're not a thinker, old fellow.

Duroux.— I should hope not! I'm nothing but an unpretentious fellow living on a little annuity and proud of it. That's good enough for me.

DeNisse.— Yes, that's right. You bear the name of a famous woman who has glory enough for two.

Duroux.— For two? Ten! For a whole neighborhood!

DeNisse.— All France has read her beautiful stories, so audacious, so vital, so exhaustive.

Duroux.— I'm the one that's exhausted.

DeNisse.— Don't get vulgar. You're more fortunate than I am, you know you are.

Duroux.— Am I? The husband of a she-writer who has the misfortune to have a little talent! Why, it's the lowest of social positions! Our bedroom is crammed with papers and books. You can't find room in the chairs to sit down, and I find penholders in the bed. The ink flows in torrents over the carpet and my wife's fingers. She never talks of anything but human documents, states of soul, the scalpel and anguish; and at table, in place of a nice little well-done lamb cutlet, I'm served slices of real life, bloody and sickening.

DeNisse.— You're exaggerating.

Duroux.— No, I'm minifying. Whatever my wife writes, everybody insists it's an autobiography, a faithful portrait of our characters, our habits, our interior, a scandalous and naïve reproduction of our personal affairs. When she describes a husband that's a fool, or a joke, or deceived by his wife, they say: "That's him, that's his picture. He's remarkably well done." When she talks about a wife that's impudent or faithless or crazy, they say: "How natural it is! That's her history, you know! That's the

reason she tells it so well." And so I find the people looking at me curiously, sarcastically, or contemptuously, wherever I go. I see them whispering and grinning when I pass. That's the sort of glory the husband of a she-writer gets! All I'm good for is to carry messages to the publishers, to take the proofs to the printer, to visit the influential critics, and to fight whoever chooses to write an article insulting my wife. Aside from that, I do not exist. I'm so insignificant that I heard somebody carry on behind me one day, with one of his friends, this delightful dialogue: "Ah! that's the husband of the famous Mme. Duroux, isn't it? Yes, that's him. What's his name? Why Duroux, of course! Yes, of course. How stupid I am!"

DeNisse.— You're vain then, are you?

Duroux.— Aren't you, too?

DeNisse.— No, I'm only proud.

Duroux.— It wouldn't be so bad if she were only pretty.

DeNisse.— But she isn't offensively ugly, is she?

Duroux.— Pah!

DeNisse.— What did you marry her for?

Duroux. — I had official guarantee that she was weak, stupid, and good. That was what I wanted, what I'd been hunting for with all my might. An excellent creature without originality. And then, crash! the minute she's married she develops a vocation, a mission, a genius in embryo, and all that sort of stuff! And then she goes to writing! she publishes! — she gets on! Ah! — And then everybody jumps on me and fondles me and embraces me and crushes my hands: My dear friend — congratulations! How proud and happy you must be! What sweet satisfaction for a husband! Ah, you've got a wife there that makes people talk about you! And I feel like yelling Stop! And besides, she's ill-tempered and hard to please. When chapter three doesn't come out the way she wants it to, the house shakes and the children hide.

DeNisse.— That's right, you *do* have children. I always forget.

Duroux.— Two; poor little imps. They never have any fun at all. The other evening my wife was sore. We had fifteen people at dinner. The Countess of Virage calls out to me across the table: "Tell me about your last; how is it?" I say: "It had its first tooth this morning." Then my wife's furious: "No, you don't understand! The Countess means my last book."

DeNisse.— What then?

Duroux.— Then I said humbly: "It's in its nineteenth thousand." And everybody said "Superb." And I felt as much like weeping as I ever did in my life.

DeNisse.— Pshaw! That doesn't get you anything. The fact of the matter is, you see, nobody's ever happy. Let's forget it.

Duroux.— How?

DeNisse.— By writing poetry.

Duroux.— But I don't ——

DeNisse.— Take a drink. Wait a minute. I have a bottle of cordial from Java. (*He rises, brings from the sideboard a fantastic bottle and two iridescent glasses.*)

Duroux.— All right, let's try it.

DeNisse (*fills the glasses*).— What's the toast? Our healths?

Duroux.— Our wives. The formula's the same.

DeNisse.— Yes. (*Significantly.*) To yours.

Duroux (*sighing*).— To yours.

THE PRIMITIVE MAN IN MODERN FICTION

By Hilda Ridley

IS there such a thing in these enlightened days as the primitive man? Probably not; he has died out to a certain extent; but many of his qualities still survive, and seem to be the fashion, especially in our late fiction, and more especially in fiction written by women. It was not always so. A few years ago, I remember reading in a short article on certain books that women novelists usually made their heroes of the sensitive, artistic temperament; and the hero of the sensitive, artistic temperament, we all allow, is anything but primitive; he is a product of civilization; in him the elements are so mixed that the feminine qualities of gentleness, intuition, and sensibility run side by side with the masculine qualities and make sweet harmony. What are the qualities which distinguish the primitive man? They are the masculine qualities minus the feminine ones; that is to say, brute strength and love of domination. Now, it is precisely these qualities which are being extolled to the skies in our late fiction. Women writers make their heroines meekly subside beneath the charms of a square jaw, broad shoulders, and an insatiable masculine instinct of mastery; they leave entirely out of consideration the finer qualities which are essential to life in these days. What does this sudden popularity of the primitive man signify? It signifies, first of all, I think, that fashions change; secondly, that there is a germ of truth in the theory that women like strong, dominating men; thirdly, that when a great truth is gaining headway there is always a slight reaction.

First, fashions change. This is obvious, since it is only a few years ago that the writer I mentioned above complained (he really seemed chagrined) that women novelists would persist in caring for heroes of the artistic temperament. It shows at least, I think (although I know men find this hard to believe), that female writers care as much for these mixed types as for the essentially masculine ones. À propos of the inability (or unwillingness) of men to believe that women care for men who are not possessed by the instinct to be master at any cost, I remember being rather amused by Charles Kingsley's ingenuous remarks in his 'Yeast.' The High Church clerical type, as we know, was Kingsley's pet aversion—partly because the men who represented

it had, in a very marked degree, those spiritual qualities which are reckoı feminine. He was forced to acknowledge, however, that this type attrac women. Now, there was only one way of getting out of this, and that v to declare that however much women might appear to care for the cleri type, they, at heart, preferred the strong, virile manhood which he delight in. And this is what he does. His logic is that because he says so it is The naïveté of it is charming. The fact remains that the clerical type h always had a peculiar charm for women, and I can only account for it believing that they care for it at least as much as for the other.

Secondly, there is a germ of truth in the theory that women like stroı dominating men. And I may say that it would be very strange if the were not. It is all so delightfully unreasonable that a woman should si render to a man because he has a square jaw and broad shoulders. A this unreasonableness takes one back in fancy to a fairly primitive state society, to a time when reason did not count very much, to a time when w was the rule and peace the exception. In those days, who was the leader men? Not the thinker, but the physically strong man, who was capable bearing much inevitable hardship. Women, at that time, had no choice but be violently mastered, for the race was to the swift and the battle to the stron For years this was the common story, and how can it have failed to have i biological effect on both man and woman? Woman got into the habit being mastered, and she grew to like it; man got into the habit of governin and he grew to like that, too, — very much. So that in so far as wom allows herself to sentimentalize in fiction over victories due to physic prowess, she is obeying a very natural instinct — the instinct which is h heritage from the ages in which she was obliged to submit to force of arm If this were all, we might pause; but we know that it is not. Green tells u in his 'History of the English People' something of that slow change i 'values' which is the work of evolution.

'From the moment when the Armada drifted back broken to Ferrol, . . the figures of warriors and statesmen were dwarfed by the grander figures c poets and philosophers. Amid the throng in Elizabeth's antechamber th noblest form is that of the singer who lays the "Faërie Queen" at her fee or of the young lawyer who muses amid the splendors of the presence ove the problems of the "Novum Organum." The triumph at Cadiz, the cor quest of Ireland, pass unheeded as we watch Hooker building up hi "Ecclesiastical Polity" among the sheepfolds, or the genius of Shakspe rising year by year into supremer grandeur in a rude theater beside th Thames.'

We know that slowly but surely a new era dawned on the world. Wh

will now deny that the things of the mind and spirit are of infinite more value than mere brute force? Side by side with the instinct of blind submission in woman, and the instinct of blind mastery in man, has grown up sweet reason, clearing the gloom, showing that never again can its gentle precepts be ignored.

And this brings us to the third point. What is the great truth which is gaining headway? It is this, surely, that with the growth of reason in men and women, certain usages which were at one time necessary can be done away with. It is not necessary to master a reasonable being by brute force, if you can use to good effect the means of persuasion. Nor does a reasonable being consent to be the puppet of another. This is putting it in a strong light; but I wish to emphasize the primitive point of view in order to account for the assumption which still lingers in so many minds that women like to be dominated. They do, alas, — at times; but this is only one side of it. The other side is that they are no longer capable of self-obliteration. Woman even when she is unconscious of it is in touch with the Time Spirit, and the Time Spirit says, 'Up and onward forevermore.' She cannot return to her old, unreasoning faith, because reason has become a factor in her existence, and reason, in its self-sufficiency, demands that she be absolutely free. But just so long as the old notion which I have accounted for prevails, just so long will woman have many a bitter battle to fight, just so long will things be very hard for her. She will have to fight, first of all, against her natural instinct of blind submission; and secondly, she will have to fight the deeply rooted prejudice which exists in society against her complete independence. It goes without saying that there will be reactions; but no one who has considered the meaning of the enormous stride which woman has made in the last century can doubt the final outcome.

What can man do to help woman in this crisis of her history? He can help her most by 'understanding.' The modern woman has discovered many things. She has discovered that strength is a name, and that there are different grades of strength; that there is the strength of the hewer of wood and drawer of water and the strength of the poet and seer; that the one may hold you captive by sheer brute force, and the other make you indeed free by exquisite understanding. What woman now asks passionately is, not to be governed, but to be understood; not to be the slave of a strong fool but the companion of an equal mind. And she does not ask this through the pages of weak fiction, but through the voices of those who are struggling in the battlefield of the world for a fuller life, for a higher self-realization.

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO'S DRAMAS

Second Article: "The Daughter of Jorio"

By Pietro Isola

WHEN has D'Annunzio given a purer, more limpid figur than Ornella? Is she not, in the midst of so much idolatr and bestiality, is she not the one salient, promising huma being? Throughout the play her voice is as the sweet son of the bird soaring skyward; every word a blessing, ever song a benediction. From the beginning, in her song,–

> 'Only of green shall be my arraying,
> Oili, Oili, Oila,'

so full of the joy, fragrance, and sparkle of the fields, until the last,—

> 'Mila, Mila! my sister in Jesus,
> I kiss your feet that bear you away!
> Heaven is for thee!'

She only, of that passionate crowd, knows, sees Mila's noble sacrifice, and sh in all purity has the right to utter that final benediction.

To me Mila, even taking in consideration the spiritual element, seems t undergo too sudden a psychological change. She is projected upon th scene with infinite art and becomes at once the dominating power, a symbo But she does become too clever. She talks most delightfully; she maintains deep sense of reality and an astonishing insight into things; she is swaye by what is pagan and Christian. In fine, she is wonderfully well balance this shepherdess who has but entered the house of Lazaro. But she is splendid contrast to Aligi. The development of the Daughter of Jorio an Francesca da Rimini are here quite suggestive and interesting to compare Both Francesca and Aligi are oppressed by an impending fatalism and w find both repeating the same thought, as, for instance, when Francesca say:

> 'Like running water
> That goes and goes and the eye sees it not,
> So is my soul' —

And Aligi also says to Cosma, —

> 'Aloof I stood like a man on the other
> Bank of a river, seeing all things as yonder
> Afar, past the water flowing between,
> The water that flows everlastingly.'

Both have a strong presentiment in their hearts; a presentiment of the love or passion that is to possess them; with Francesca it shall lead her to break her marital vows; with Aligi to break tradition, the breaking of the laws of the family. The profound importance of that is accentuated in the second act, when Cosma says, —

> 'You have verily lighted
> A holy lamp in your darkness,
> Yet it is not enkindled in limits appointed
> Chosen out of old time by your fathers.'

Both these persons are under an irresistible spell, yet how strongly Mila's figure contrasts with that of Aligi, while Paolo gives no adequate contrast to his Francesca. Perhaps this is the cause of such rapid change in Mila. The introduction of the fireside has been a source of variety and power in the first act. By placing Mila there a powerful avocation takes place and she becomes the predominant figure of the whole scene, not only from the artistic effect, but because we know at once that she holds within her the fate of the whole family. Standing erect upon the hearth she becomes a symbol and a power whom all must obey; the kindred accuse her of sinfulness or profanity, but they are obedient to that inflexible power, that law of protection and hospitality. In the Abruzzi, where these laws, ancient as they are, remain of almost pristine veneration, the sense of hospitality is rendered very keen by the fact, not only that the land has been impervious or slow to the changes wrought by intervening years, but by the necessity of mutual protection so vital in those lonely, remote regions. And this sanctity is not, in the Abruzzi, limited to the fireplace, but extends over the whole house and even adjacent land. In fact the land itself might suffer by the breaking of such law, as D'Annunzio indicates in another tragedy: 'Sir, you are on your own premises; it is wrong, and it is sinister for the land that surrounds your threshold; it is sinister to menace one who does not harm you. I go, nor will I return. Once beyond your door I will bare my feet and cast the sandals in the raging torrent.'

At the time of the first performances of this play, in the midst of all th enthusiasm the general verdict favored the first act as the most perfect of th tragedy. To those who have so far only read the play the first act does no seem in any way superior to the others, and such an impression, received b ocular assistance, must be due to the element of picturesqueness and for th fact that all in that scene is of a character to be easily grasped and assimilate Surely when we read the second act we find it replete with beauty in textur smoothness, and vigor, and its splendid contrasts of types and action. The is in it so much of the true life of that Italy, older than Christianity, ascen ing to remote periods, — the millenary soul of that agrestic and pastor country. The act begins with Mila's incantation and gradually ascen with that amœbean song which is the jewel of the tragedy. A song full c poetry and of that lyric melody that is the true characteristic of what it rep resents. The peaceful scene in the silence of the mountains; the silen Angel silhouetted against he sky; the semi-religious language of Aligi; th saintly answers coming from Cosma; the sudden appearance of the demon possessed youth, and the dark sorrowful figure of Ornella; the dying lam before the Virgin; the prostrate figure of Mila, all prepare and form a stron background to the brutal, diabolical incursion of the father, Lazaro di Roio leading to the fatal moment,— to parricide. Every part of the act seems per fectly modelled and in no other play has D'Annunzio shown more power more tragedy, as he has not in any other play shown greater self-restraint — a true indication of art.

The third act offers no less interest in all its elements. Lazaro's body within stretched on the bare floor or earth, his head resting upon a bundl of grapevine branches. Here again we find the pagan element and th Christian linked. In the first act Aligi says to the mother,—

> ' Santo Giovanni said to me: ' Rest in safety,
> Without holy candles thou shalt not die.'

Lazaro has died unconfessed, unabsolved. But he is truly in the lap of his mother, Nature, and the grapevine links him to the Dyonisan period and myths. Thus if the Church deprives him of catafalque and candles, paganism offers him its symbols. The bewailers surround the body, praying, singing, weeping; the penitent Aligi arrives, followed by the crowd carrying the mysterious carven angel, and the mother offers the *consolo* that is to render less fearful his last moments. Again the luminous moment arrives and Mila di Codra appears to prove Aligi innocent and to prove also the sincerity

of her transformation, and by immolating herself to save the man by whose love she has been redeemed. 'The flame is beautiful.'

La Fiaccola sotto il Moggio. It has been said,— and things often said become unassailable truths in the mind of the utterers,— it has been said that the so-called strenuous life is of the North and especially of the Americans of that section. Surely D'Annunzio, Latin and Southerner, proves that some of that energy, of that restless vitality, is also of his people. One year after the first performance of the play just considered another important tragedy was placed upon the stage. This we must admit represents a very strenuous industry and a portentous power of work, when we consider also all the other forms of literary activities to which this writer, monthly and weekly, gives expression.

If it was Michetti that in a great measure gave impetus and inspiration to the completion of 'The Daughter of Jorio' by his painting of the same subject, it was surely the same artist who by his other painting, 'I Serpenti,' inspired him, if not with the whole, with one important feature of 'The Light under the Bushel.' It was only in 1900 that Michetti exhibited that painting illustrating a singular procession that took place in the Abruzzi. The meaning of it is lost in the remotest anti-Christian and pre-Roman periods, and whatever may have been in its primitive rite the tutelary god or priest, within our era and in that section, St. Dominick seems to be the patron saint, although I do not know what his relation with snakes may have been. D'Annunzio, however, links again pagan and Christian rites. The procession itself is a most astounding performance, repulsive and attractive at once. Therein appears so much of that primordial power; so much of the passion and mystery, that it becomes irresistible, although no less terrible than the procession so vividly described in 'The Triumph of Death.' One sees advancing the puppet-like, rigid, undulating statue of the saint, carried upon the shoulders of stalwart men. Singular mixture of pagan idolatry and Christian rite. Children in the garb of angels glide about among men and women carrying loathsome serpents encircled about their bodies, their arms, their necks. The moving, writhing curves of the serpents contrast ominously with the bodies of the men and women rendered rigid, cataleptic, by fear and passion; flowers; men, old and young; women, comely and haggard; serpents and flaming torches; feral cries and holy words; Latin prayers and vernacular oaths and fair-winged children, all moving and fused in that living mass with the old saint still undulating in rhythmic motion, upon the shoulders of devotees, with the red standard still flaunting its menacing red folds, like tongues of fire; and the sun beating fiercely upon the loathsome

scene, the procession goes on from house to house, from street to street, from hill to hill, to an interminable end, where they fall exhausted.

D'Annunzio does not introduce the procession in his tragedy, but he introduces the snake charmer with much effect, and thus conveys his usual idea of connection with the primitive days. There is nothing in the whole play, historical and archeological, that is not corroborated by facts. If he introduces the snake charmer, the locality warrants its presence, because in the days of antiquity snakes were venerated there, and vestiges have been uncovered of the precincts where the 'horrid rite,' took place. If he speaks of feudal period and the Sangros and Acclozamoras are introduced, we can still go and see their castles. Their families are still extant.

The moment that the tragedy develops is that of the fall of feudalism by its weight of sin. How skillfully he describes the decay and hatred and sinfulness by crystallizing it all in the decay and hatred and sinfulness of one family. Tebaldo di Sangro and Bernardo Acclozamora represent with their perennial quarrels the last days of the feudal time. The mother, Donna Algerina, is wholly unconscious of the change that is to take place; of the impending, sinister punishment that is to overtake the family. She is ever occupied in diligent search among the family papers, for the one document that, found, would lift the family to its pristine wealth and power. In the directions for stage setting D'Annunzio is very exacting that every minute detail shall accentuate the decay, and the speeches persistently accentuate that condition. Simonetto and Gigliola are the two children by the first marriage of Tebaldo; innocent victims of the father's sins. These youths can hardly be said to belong to the past, and yet we feel intuitively that they are not to be of the future nor present; they are the last barren buds of a decayed family. Simonetto is sickly, condemned to an early death; impotent to arise; a mere living thing in whom is visited a great punishment. Gigliola, the sister, is to be the terrible avenger, she holds within her young heart a fearful secret; the knowledge of the murder of her mother at the hands of her father and Angizia, who has since become his wife. This ever-dominant thought transforms this sweet flower, as the name implies, into a most formidable, relentless enemy within the household. In her implacability, in her almost demented action and sinister utterances, she contrasts effectively with the two old nurses, Arabella and Benedetta, untouched remnants of a better past. Their life has been one continuous self-abnegation; solicitous, tender over the old grandmother, with whom they have grown up, they now pour all the sweetness of their hearts upon the last two scions. They see ruin overtake the family; yet they remain at their post, faithful, trustful. Angizia, the second wife, and her father, Edia Fura, are the two local figures, and both

symbolize the mysterious power preserved through the changing centuries of cults and faiths, but Edia Fura maintains in all its purity the ascetic element, while Angizia has become negative and a brutal murderess. She has entered the family as a servant, has become the wife of the *Barone*, and is suspected by Gigliola, who in her conversation unfolds the secret of the murder of the mother, found crushed under the lid of a gigantic cassone. Gigliola, touchingly beautiful when in contact with the grandmother or ministering to Simonetto, is dark, relentless, when confronting the father or 'the other.' She is awaiting the anniversary of the mother's death (the very day the action takes place), the day when 'the other' shall meet her fate and punishment. She says: 'Nothing of youth is left to me. In one year the springtime of my youth has flown. I have ripened in the shadow.'

There is an angry quarrel between the two brothers, very strongly depicting the atmosphere of the house or home; it is a bitter quarrel and contrasts in its cruel utterances with the language of the mother, who, hearing the angry altercation, appears. Words full of sorrow, full of dignity, of power, and among the best in the play.

There is also a passage between father and daughter, when the latter finally confronts him with the question: 'Who, who caused her death? the truth, the truth!' The passage, terrible in itself, is intensified by the introduction of the stepmother, Angizia, who of course recognizes in Gigliola her silent accuser.

Angizia: What have you to say? Say it all, all; speak! My eyes will not be lowered before yours; no, they will not; I know what you are saying when your gaze is fixed upon me: 'It is you, it is you!' it says: "Well, yes, it is I.'

Tebaldo wishes to prevent such confession, although innocent himself, and commands her to be silent, but Angizia, now angered, bursts out in all her inborn brutality:

'No, I do not lie. It is true; it is true. I am the one; I say it and my eyes are not lowered. Behold! I have answered. I do not fear. It is to-day one year. What will you do? What can you do? I am protected by your father. We were two, we are two. I say this that you may know that to reach me you have to prostrate your father.'

Now we surely know what to expect. What was simply a suspicion has become a confessed certainty; war is opened in all its fierceness; all that remains to know is the form that revenge and punishment will take. Thus far Gigliola has warned the father and 'the other' that the anniversasy was at hand, and on that day would be fulfiled the promise made by Gigliola over the tomb of the mother.

Edia Fura, the snake charmer, has heard rumors of the marriage of his

daughter with the *Barone* and has come down for the day of St. Dominick; he does not believe this marriage has taken place, nor indeed would Edia deem it a great honor to be connected with the barons, because he has the dignity of a most remote ancestry, all in the service of the Sanctuary.

He pursues the genus that glides and leaves no trace. All that others cannot hear he hears; not with the ear, but by a power that dwells within him. He plays in his own manner upon the flute, made of the bone of the deer, but no other has that skill. He only knows, as his dead knew before him. Such is his power, such his art, and of aught else he cares not; no more than for the skin shed by the snake.

A man who has that power and feels his dignity is not likely to rejoice over the marriage of his daughter. His wife, however, advises him to go and ascertain, and he departs. He is seen prowling about the premises of the Barons, and of course the servants immediately recognize in him the father of Angizia, who, on her part, as soon as she discovers his presence, has him chased away, in fact casts stones and imprecations herself. Gigliola discovers him in the garden, where he is hiding, and leads him within the house. He is wounded; his hand bleeding and his heart broken by the unfilial and brutal reception. Gigliola soothes and bandages his hand and also endeavors to pour sweet balsam in his poor old heart:

Giglio.— Has a snake bitten you?

Edia.— You have said it.

Gigliola.— A poisonous one?

Edia.— You have said it.

Gigliola.— Will it kill?

Edia.— It may, or it may not.

Gigliola.— Sit there and give me your hand that I may bandage it.

Edia.— I did not hold you in my arms when you were crying. You I did not rock in the cradle; for you I did not take the morsel of bread from my mouth, nor withheld I the drink of water from my parched throat, that you might grow and bloom to beauty. Yet you fling no stones at me, nor imprecations; you bandage my wounded hand.

Gigliola begins to ply him with questions as to what he has in the goat-skin bag, that with the green cord. Are the snakes really poisonous? and, if one were to place his hands within the bag, would he be bitten, and would death come, and how soon? Could he leave the bag with her for a little while that she might show it to her little brother? Of course the snake charmer rejects such a demand, but out of gratitude he offers some presents:

Edia.— Edia asks nothing. He gives. He begs no drink of water nor morsel of bread. He tarries not upon thresholds. He is brother to the

wind. He says little. He knows the value of silence. He sweeps over the valley. He has the claw of the vulture; a sharp eye; the slightest sign suffices him. Let the grass blade sway and he knows the wherefore. Edia does not beg, but gives. I had brought this comb for the bride. (May the icy wind snarl her hair!) And this necklace? (May it lay heavy as a brazen yoke!) And see this long coronal. (May it pierce her throat from side to side!)

Gigliola.— Is it a crinal? It is as large as a stiletto.

Edia.— Look! See this glass vessel — its luster is like the skin of the serpent under the midday sun.

Gigliola.— Where have you found these things?

Edia.— Above Luco towers a mountain, steep and swarming with snakes, called Angizia; the name of your stepmother. There I go to find my prey -- and there in the old, old times was a city; a city of magic kings. While rummaging in a hollow spot I discovered among bones three covered vessels of dark clay; in the first I found grains of barley; in the second the skins of grapes; in the third these things that I now give you.

Gigliola.— To me?

Edia.— Yes, to you; I have no daughter now.

Gigliola.— I take the crinal only.

At this juncture Bertrando Acclazamora appears with Angizia. Edia rises with haste to escape from them and Gigliola seizes the occasion to withdraw and hide the goatskin bag containing the most virulent snakes. Angizia again insults the father, calling him a thief and as one whom, in her childhood, she now remembers, the children chased and hooted through the streets. Bertrando orders him out, pushing him toward the entrance gates. Edia then pronounces his malediction upon the daughter: a malediction that could come only from such a man:

'He whom you have renounced and also stoned will burn the ancient oaken cradle wherein he rocked you; the cradle yet fastened to the great bed by the worn cord; therein are the kernels of wheat and the grains of salt and the pellets of bread and of wax. Yet, he will not burn it upon the hearth, but on the highway where the four roads cross and the winds moan and the hounds howl. And may your ashes be scattered as those ashes; and may you ever meet night's darkness with fear and trembling.

Edia followed by Bertrando goes forth.

Passing by the other parts of the tragedy I come to the close — with the prayer of Gigliola before the fatal hour of revenge and self-destruction; Gigliola has given orders that all the tapers and lamps in the family chapel be lighted, 'that I may find the great light when I return:' 'Mother, all the lamps be lighted, mother, all the torches, for the great sacrifice of the hour

that shall have no equal. I have known the slow destruction, day by day, breathing the dust of things decayed. The great sorrow was for a year, my only father. My father was called destruction. The other was mine no longer, you know, because they are two and two they were in their cruelty. Mother, give me now the strength to go to you purified, pacified; to you who left in my heart the call of death. I place that death close to me and go forth to the revenge; will that I may not turn or retrace my steps, nor halt. And as your end was atrocious, so I will it to be for me who did not guard over you, who did not save you. And the more cruel my suffering the nearer I will be to you; be coupled to you, fuse myself in you, O mother, as in the days when you bore me in your saintly silence.'

At the close of this prayer she takes the bag containing the loathsome and poisonous things and plunges both hands within:

'It is done, mother, you have given the strength, but, mother, be with me longer yet.'

In the third scene Gigliola appears, her features contracted beyond recognition, her hands swollen and black. Gigliola asks:

'Where is my father? 'Who has killed her? who has killed her?

Nurses.— Of whom is she speaking; of the saintly soul?

Gigliola.— No; of the woman; she is there, dead! I found her dead upon the bed. No, I am not delirious; I saw her, dead.

The father appears on the threshold, and in seeing him the daughter comprehends:

'You! the blood is upon you.'

Tebaldo.— I — Yes! I have killed her. Her blood is upon me. You are revenged.

Gigliola.— You could not. The vow was mine and mine only. Victim for victim!

Tebaldo.— I have done it, daughter, that your hand be not contaminated. In this sacrifice I have wiped out my own shame.

Gigliola.— You have only sealed the accusing lips.

Tebaldo.— Those lips lied, that I might be lost to your heart. Oh! have pity, daughter, have pity!

Gigliola.— Touch me not. She has called me; she calls me. I must go. I have the bed for my last hour; there upon the stone that was closed by two ——

Tebaldo.— Oh, how implacable! Hear me. My heart is broken. I also will not survive. I speak already from the shadow.

Gigliola.— Ah me! miserable, who lighted the lamps and now must darken them. Let shadow come. All the shadow upon her who could not

fulfil the vow. Put out the lights; turn the torches down, strike them upon the earth. I have not known how to hold mine erect. All was in vain. Addio, addio. Let no one follow me.

This tragedy may not compare, perhaps, with 'The Daughter of Jorio,' but it is of a very high literary value. For stage purpose it is rather too monotonous, but in it D'Annunzio has made luminous a period wrought with much promise for Italy, and in fact, humanity at large. The tragedy is there in all its potency; irresistible, silent. The more terrible for its irresistibility, the more sinister for its silence, the more hopeless for its bursting into the midst of the family and home. Singling out the different characters I should place the *serparo* Edia, as the best, surely the most expressive of what D'Annunzio wishes to impart. He is strong, massive, all one piece. The representative of the great and ancient traditions of the Abruzzi, he enters the scene with the dignity born of inherent power and he leaves it, not to go to destruction and extinction, like all the other characters, but to go forth in the world; to return to his mountains with the same dignity and the power of his ancestors; conscious of the future before him, of the future of the Abruzzi, of the future of Italy. Edia is not the masterman; he represents the people, the true and only Master.

I have endeavored in this sketch of D'Annunzio's dramatic works to be frank in condemnation and admiration. All of his works have great literary value, and if the ideas exposed in them do not harmonize with mine or ours, he surely has the courage of his own convictions and says what he has to say in a frank manner. He is a genius, and that stamp is in all his works. What would, after all, be dramatic art in Italy without this gifted and industrious writer?

THE POETRY OF ETHNA CARBERY

By William J. Merrill

IRELAND presents in literature a peculiar duality. In her, in ages past, were the fountains of poesy and romance. Wonderful indeed is that tremendous power of ideas by which the Celtic race, for so many centuries conquered and downtrodden, has enslaved its conquerors, laying upon them the indelible impress of its genius. Hers are their boasted tales of knightly renown, of chivalrous daring and romantic love. Engulfing not only a race and its lands, but its literature as well, the victorious nations, in that last, confessed in so far their own inferiority. Wherever the Arthurian legends, the Niebelungen tales, the romances of the Decameron are found, there the genius of the Celtic imagination has retrieved the conquests which the Celtic arms were unable to prevent.

When Ireland was overshadowed by the great wing of English supremacy — represented in literature by the dominance of the English language and the virtual suppression of the Gaelic tongue—the lamp of Celtic inspiration burned dimly and seemed about to go out. Literature in Ireland during the past century and a half seems to be the record of the struggle of the Celtic soul to throw off the superincumbent weight of an alien thought and literature and be herself again. Some that might have been her strongest champions in the fight were drawn aside into the alien ranks. So completely have the names of Goldsmith, Sheridan, Swift, and others become linked with the dominant English tradition that one often forgets that the strength with which they builded, in the temple of the Saxon's fame, was drawn from the veins of Erin, if not from her magical wells of thought. But there were humbler writers who found expression in the Gaelic language, through whom the Celtic spirit still continued to speak, though faintly. Long years and the earnest efforts of many faithful minds and hearts were necessary to enable that Celtic spirit to express itself clearly and truly, through the medium which had been, as it were, thrown over its own natural means of expression.

If we insist that a distinctive literature cannot exist apart from a distinctive language, then there really can be no Irish literature except that which is written in the Gaelic. But if we consider, as seems more reasonable, that it is the mental viewpoint, or the spiritual attitude—be it called what it may —the peculiar and characteristic way of seeing, feeling, thinking, and expressing, that is the real soul of a literature, its unifying principle, rather

than the language used, then the term 'Irish Literature' assumes a wider significance. The dictionary seems then an insufficient bond to identify as solely part of English literature, writings that teem with Celtic thought and feeling, though they be expressed in English words. Then, the work of those writers who, though, through stress of circumstances they used the English language, nevertheless drew their inspiration and strength from Ireland and the Irish tradition, keeping true to them so far as in them lay, seem to have a rightful claim to be classed as belonging to Irish literature,— a literature, whether in Gaelic or English, distinct and individual, and reaching, century upon century, back into a rich and glorious past.

In this literature that is distinctly Irish the poetical element is noticeably predominant. We are told that the poets of the olden times in Erin stood next in rank to the kings, wearing one less of the distinguishing colors of rank than they. When the ancient bards had passed away with the fall of the chieftainry which they represented, the poets of the common people took their places. Their number during the eighteenth century, says Dr. Douglas Hyde, was prodigious. And to-day the mantles of them, and of the bards, have fallen on worthy shoulders — for a band of singers and dreamers as thoroughly Irish as any that have gone before, but with a message and mission of more world-wide scope, is digging again the ancient springs, whence is flowing once more the clear, pure stream of Irish poetry — chiefest branch of the 'new' Celtic literature.

The poetry of Ireland, so far as it is typically Irish, whether expressed in the Gaelic or in English, seems to possess as its distinctive characteristic a peculiar strain of sadness. The Gael sings not, like the English bard, of victory and conquest — of the glory and the joy of life. The sweet singers of Erin — those who have not sold their birthright — are true even in their most personal notes to the sorrows of their motherland; and when the woes and the wrongs of that motherland are themselves the subject of their lays, we recall no poetry of patriotism which breathes such fervent devotion, such an intense personal affection for even the very rocks and hills of the country of its love, as that of Ireland's loyal sons and daughters. The sorrows of Kathleen Ni Houlihan — one of the many appellations under which the green island is sung — seem to have colored so deeply the lives of her children that 'all their songs must echo sighing and their laughter trill with tears.' Search all through the writings of the genuinely Irish poets, and the note of sadness is never far away. The infinite pathos of the viol is theirs, sometimes for a little the stirring strains of the pipes or their rollicking lilt, but seldom or never the solemn joy of the organ's tones. The hopes they sing are forlorn hopes; the victories they declaim are those that are to be

won in some brighter day; the leaders they praise are those who died fighting for country and kin. But theirs, too, is a courage unconquered by defeat, an illimitable hope that sees in spirit the vision of the future, even when the mortal eyes are blinded by tears.

With this persistent note of sadness — indeed, probably growing out of it — the poetry of Ireland is marked by a delicate spirituality which gives it a peculiar charm. Renan, himself of Celtic origin, declares the Celtic to be the most feminine in temperament of all races. If this be true it may be the secret of that strange delicacy in strength which can better be felt than described, — which is found, to note one instance only, in songs like those of Gerald Griffin.

Of that band of young writers mentioned above — torch-bearers, indeed, carrying forward once more the light of the Celtic genius — a place in the foremost rank must be accorded to Anna Johnston MacManus, or 'Ethna Carbery,' as the public knows her. Her hand gave to the world before her early death only one small volume of poems, 'The Four Winds of Eirinn,' but in it she makes amply good her claim to the prerogative of song. In their sadness and delicacy her poems are typical, but always with an unmistakable personal note of their own. They stand somewhat apart from the main trend of the so-called neo-Celtic school of poets, which seems to be towards mysticism of one kind or another. With these searchers after an ethereal and invisible beauty, far removed from all material things, these dreamers of a love transcending love, she is not to be placed, though in a few of her poems points of contact with them are shown. But she is too closely and intensely human, it would seem, to be held long by this mood. The theme of most of her poems is, simply and frankly, love — warm and human, and expressed in terms that always ring true in sentiment. Equally strong, however, though versed in fewer of her songs, is her passion of patriotism. She might, indeed, almost be said to stand between the poets of the Young Ireland era, who began early in the last century to pour their burning tribute of song upon the altar of Erin, and the singing seers of mysticism and symbolism whose voices are now being raised.

We find the mystic mood in 'Niamh,' 'Angus the Lover,' 'The Quest,' and some others. The following lines are from the last-mentioned poem.

> 'The moon-gold web of your hair is a mesh that I cannot break,
> In the shadowy wells of your eyes I stoop Love's thirst to slake,
> And find the water as bitter as Death's unwelcome cup —
> Still, slave to your wordless bidding, I quaff the bitter up.

'I see you in foam of the waves, and clasp it with passionate hands, —
Yet ever it vanishes, soundless, and vague as a dream, in the sands.
Are you too, a dream, O Heartbreaker? Shall I greet you some day or some night,
To know you for sorrow eternal, or the star of unending delight?'

That love of country which is at once a passion and a chivalry burns through those poems which Ethna Carbery gave to 'Ireland of her heart's love.' Like the writings of the Young Irelanders of '48, they breathe at times a terrific defiance and an undying hatred, and yet withal a tender spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice that redeems their harsher qualities. The following lines are from the poem entitled, 'Mo Chraoibhin Cno.'

'A Sword of Light hath pierced the dark, our eyes have seen the Star.
O Eire, leave the ways of sleep, now days of promise are:
The rusty spears upon your walls are stirring too and fro,
In dreams they front uplifted shields — Then wake,
Mo Chraoibhin Cno!

'The little waves creep whispering where sedges fold you in,
And round you are the barrows of your buried kith and kin;
Oh! famine-wasted, fever-burnt, they faded like the snow
Or set their hearts to meet the steel — for you,
Mo Chraoibhin Cno!

. . . . . .

'Then wake, *a gradh!* We yet shall win a gold crown for your head,
Strong wine to make a royal feast — the white wine and the red —
And in your oaken mether the yellow mead shall flow,
What day you rise in all men's eyes — a Queen,
Mo Chraoibhin Cno!'

In this we have an effective example of that use of Gaelic words or phrases as a refrain, that strange mingling of languages which we find in the old street ballads and in many later songs as well. In the phrase here used — one which has been often applied to Ireland, — we have a striking instance of the poetic imagination of the Celt. Ireland, personified as a beautiful, brown-haired girl, is addressed as 'My cluster of nuts' — the literal meaning of the phrase. What could be more expressive and poetic?

Lured by the spell of Ethna Carbery's verses we are led into the enchanted

Shadow Land of Irish mythology. Here we learn of the winds their secrets. They attain colors and qualities, if not distinct personalities. Indeed, it is a peculiarity of the Celtic imagination when dealing with nature that its figures seem never to detach themselves entirely from nature and become distinct and independent personages, as do the heroes of classical mythology, but are ever ready, at a breath, to return to the elements from which they sprung. But we find that the north wind is the Black Wind of Grief, 'the voice of the restless dead'; the wind that comes from the east is red and cruel, the Wind of Remorse; the south wind is the White Wind of Love and Lovers; the west wind, 'the Brown Wind of Memory.' In and out through these songs they blow, lending delicate shades of meaning when their symbolism is rightly understood. In this enchanted land we meet, too, with Angus the Lover, the Celtic Eros, with his three bright birds, whose kisses bring love — and death; with Lugh, the great god of light; with the mysterious Niamh, the goddess of beauty, and with the Sidhe, or Gentle Folk, the fairy people of Ireland — the last of a vanishing race, still abiding among the misty vales and green hills of Erin, though the skeptic and the scoffer seem to have driven them from all other lands of the world. Folklore, too, is drawn upon, with its tales of ghosts and banshees — and one figure which we do not remember to have come across elsewhere, the mysterious and deadly 'Love Talker.'

'I met the Love Talker one eve in the glen,
He was handsomer than any of our handsome young men,
His eyes were blacker than the sloe, his voice sweeter far
Than the crooning of old Kevin's pipes beyond in Coolnagar.

. . . . . .

'Running ever thro' my head is an old-time rune,
"Who meets the Love Talker must weave her shroud soon."
My mother's face is furrowed with the salt tears that fall,
But the kind eyes of my father are the saddest sight of all.

'I have spun the fleecy lint and now my wheel is still,
The linen length is woven for my shroud, fine and chill.
I shall stretch me on the bed where a happy maid I lay —
Pray for the soul of Maire Og at dawning of the day!'

We know of no other language so rich in terms of endearment as the Gaelic. Even when translated into their English equivalents they charm by their

unusualness, their variety and their beauty. The land itself has a multitude of endearing appellations,—' Mo Chraoibhin Cno,' 'Kathleen Ni Noulihan,' ' My Dark Rosaleen,' ' Shiela Ni Gara,' ' Silk of the Kine,' and many others, — heritages of the time when singing her praises too openly might bring dire punishment upon the ardent poet. ' Vein of my heart,' ' pulse of my heart,' ' my treasure,' ' my share of the world,' — these are a few of the expressions which the Gaelic poet lover finds ready for weaving into his song of passion. With wonderful deftness and not the slightest trace of straining for effect, Ethna Carbery makes use of this poetic heritage of the Celt. For the reader accustomed to the conventional terms of English poetry they cannot fail of appreciation and delight, when once the spirit of them, their rare instinctive beauty, are caught and realized.

Unmistakably from the pages of ' The Four Winds of Eirinn,' rings the clear, true note of one who was born to sing. And sing she did, out of the fullness of a heart full of the sorrow, joy, and beauty of life. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to find a labored line in the whole of her poems. Not that they are carelessly done. Notwithstanding their rare spontaneity, they have at the same time a high degree of artistic finish. Trite as the expression is, hers is truly 'the art that conceals itself,' —or rather, what perhaps is almost the same thing, feeling so instinctively true that a false note is almost impossible. For most remarkable of all in her work is the musical quality. Her poems are pre-eminently lyrics. With one or two minor exceptions, all the poems in the volume are songs, —and with such music in themselves, such a rare sense of the musical qualities of words, that to many of them music itself would seem an unwarranted addition. How the words sing themselves in these lines from ' In Donegal ':

' I know a purple moorland where a blue loch lies,
Where the lonely plover circles, and the pee-wit cries,
Oh! do you yet remember that dear day in September,
The hills and shadowy waters beneath those tender skies ?

. . . . . .

' In Kerry of the Kings you hear the cuckoo call,
You watch the gorse grow withered and its yellow glory fall;
Yet may some dream blow o'er you the welcome that's before you
Among the wind-swept heather and gray glens of Donegal.'

Here the internal rhyme so characteristic of the Gaelic is used with fine effect, and the words, simple as they are in themselves, seem to carry under their joy a thrill of half-felt, dimly realized sorrow. They have something of the strange charm of sheer sound-beauty that we admire in Poe and

Coleridge. More than once in these poems a phrase will be found remi ing one of Poe, — such as

> ' shadow waves, where sleep
> Old loves, old hates, whose doom derides
> Vows we forget to keep; '

Or,

> ' As if the lone hush of lake waters were stirred.'

' The Song of Ciabhan,' in its closely worked details and in the quietr and smoothness of its movement, seems reminiscent of Tennyson. quote two stanzas:

> ' The slow blue stars
> Beneath your brows
> At the clash of wars
> Need never rouse;
> Through day hours winging,
> My love shall tend,
> And my gold harp send
> You to sleep with singing.
>
> ' Tall blossoms gleam
> Where the spear-sharp sedge
> Sways in its dream
> By the wavelet's edge;
> There shall come to harm you
> No scourging wind;
> But south-blown, kind,
> It shall soothe and charm you.'

But to attempt to make comparisons here is only to discover that thei a marked personality underlying all these songs. The material to a cert extent is old, but the hand that moulded it into things of new beauty ha skill all its own.

The extreme simplicity and directness of an exquisite thing like the pc entitled ' Consummation ' are apt to lead us to overlook the delicate mast of mood and word which such a bit of work calls for. We quote but f stanzas:

> ' In a sheltered, cool, green place
> You and I once stood together
> Where the quickens interlace.
>
> . . . . . .

'Stars and mist, and dew-wet flowers
Scented, shielded, and made holy
That sweet hour of the hours.

'Oh, Dear Heart, life holds no gift
Half so precious, half so brittle,
As this Love-cup that we lift.

'And remembering, down the years
All my songs shall echo sighing,
All my laughter trill with tears.'

We cannot refrain from quoting four more stanzas, to illustrate the striking and individual charm of Ethna Carbery's work — the first two from 'Invocation.'

'The steeds of the Black Wind race
Frost-shod and fleet
Where you hide from my love your face
And stay your feet:
In this rose-rimmed quiet glen
I bide and pray
Through the star-filled gloom, and the day,
For your voice again.

. . . . . .

'When the arrow ends its flight
You will lonely grow
For a woman's kiss in the night
And her breast of snow:
You will reach your arms to the Dark,
And call and cry
As the winged winds sweep by —
But no ear shall hark.'

The following is from 'My Prayer':

'Set your love before me as a shield!
That, whistling by, the shadowy, wounding spear
Of the world's hate may seek my heart in vain.
Where on your breast it nestles — half in fear
Of the divine sweet silence round us twain —
Set your love before me as a shield!'

And this from ' The Wonder-Music.'

> ' I would play you the music of mourning!
> And put you to grieving, oh, dear love and fair,
> Till you droop your young head of the shadowy hair,
> And the round rainbow tears come atrembling and fall,
> For a sorrow of sorrows that broods over all —
> For a cruel pain burning.'

It is, indeed, hardly fair to take such stanzas as these separately and a from the songs of which they are such integral parts. For a song, it se more than any other form of verse, must be judged in an entirety. But t who have felt the charm of the ' wonder-music ' which Ethna Carbery m know that in her death some years ago there was lost to the world the p keen, true-ringing strain of one who struck the harp of Erin with no ur tain touch.

THE BEAT OF A WING

By Charlotte Porter

On and on! hurling through
Fainting spaces of tranquil blue,
I beheld in the Vast, remote and high,
Soaring lonely, a strong bird fly.
Oh, the sight was a song,
Only no words belong
To a call of the spheres;
Only eyes waken ears
To a song the gaze hears.
Who will witness it? You!
Heed the hushing song,— see the singing sight
Of a lonely bird's flight
Through the sky's silent arc!
Lo! with strain of the effort the wings shrink dark,
With the beat of each motive they droop, drop stark,
Of the glory bereft, the color, light,
While they pulse the most might:
Living buds of winged flower
Urging on the ripe hour!
Ah! the bloom of the effort now opens them bright!
See, oh, see! Beat of motive now blossoms them white,
And the feathery petals fling wide rays
From the heaven-lit ways
To the founts of desire in the solar blaze!

THE PÆSISTI OF THE NINETEEN CENTURY

By Thomas D. Bergen

IN a glance backward over the course of the Italian Romantic ment one will recall none of the unmeaning violence that in E typified the recalcitration against the conventional life duri sway of romanticism there. Those red-shirted revolutionis made the *Risorgimento* just what it was lived and died deatl were in themselves poems more noble than those which they l the latter day anthologist to chronicle.

With one exception there was a notably breezy cheer in the verse period. Alfieri, the fiery misanthrope of Piedmont, by means of his objurgating drama, paved the way for the birth of a new nation, the h unrealized vision dreamed of by Dante, tacitly formulated by Mach and accomplished by Cavour. The peculiarly somber and tumu tone of Alfieri, however, is not approached by any of his successors. Pindemonte (1753–1828), whose mild stand against formalism in marks him as a connecting link between the two centuries, betrays poetry no such black pessimism as does either Leopardi or Alfieri. S like Alfred de Vigny in his 'ivory tower' Pindemonte leisurely con verses, pleasantly reminiscent of Vergil diluted and permeated by a pl note. His 'Poesie campestri,' markedly tenuous, are the first Italian ples of what later on in the century became, in robuster form, the pre mode,— the delineation of nature's charms as revealed to the all-se eye of the poet and disassociated from all other purpose. But this ser ness was no whit more developed in Pindemonte than in Thomson, Seasons are, after all, portrayals of effects of which he felt, as an Am critic appositely remarks, 'the generalized emotional value.' We may justly regard this patrician exquisite as the unconscious precursor romantic movement in Italy, much as we do the Lombard abbot Parin left, on the threshold of the new century, a caustic satire on the dry- society of the old régime, as the herald of modernity in Italian letter we may truly consider Pindemonte the natural literary ancestor of tl leading poets of contemporary Italy, Pascoli and Marradi.

The lyric romanticist of Italy par excellence is that associate of Pindemonte, Ugo Foscolo, the Latin Werther, whose erudition combined with one of the most complex make-ups of the century to inspire him with a large body of verse remarkable alike for limpidity and elegance of form. Greek by birth and of rearing Dalmatian and Venetian by turns, Foscolo's intricate personality has given more than one analogist of psychologic bent free play for elaborating theories to explain his sporadic genius. Howsoever much the victim of immoderate idolatry on the part of his contemporaries, Foscolo doubtless deserved great praise because of the all but faultless expression of his verse and its stateliness and nobility of sentiment. But mere technical excellence, even though it be transcendent, is in itself not enough. Nowhere in the work of these early poets do we find the keen appreciation of nature shown in such lavish visualizations as Dante gives us in his picture of young Arno on his journey through the Casentino vale:

> 'Li ruscelletti che de'verdi colli
> Del Casentin discendon giuoso in Arno,
> Facendo i lor canali e freddi e molli,' etc.

Or as Petrarch offers in his description of the enchanted Vaucluse region:

> 'Lieti fiori, e felici, ben nate herbe
> . . . . . .
> Schietti arboscelli, e verdi frondi acerbe;
> Amorosette, e pallide viole;
> Ombrose selve, ove percote il Sole,
> Che vi fa co'suoi raggi alte, e superbe,
> O suave contrada; o puro fiume
> Che prendi qualità dal vivo lume,' etc.

In fact one must adventure on much beyond Pindemonte and Foscolo before the phylogeny of this type of Italian poetry is clearly observable. The appreciation of nature as a legitimate and all-sufficing end for the poet in and for itself is not properly seen even in the work, at times instinct with almost the melody of Shelley, of the Venetian Luigi Carrer (1801–1850). Specific comparisons of poems in different languages are bound to be especially unsatisfactory; but one feels a strangely compelling cadence, a distinctly languorous swing in such of Carrer's poems as his 'hymns' 'To Earth' and 'To the Sea.'

One cannot pass by the dramatic figure of the Tuscan poet and patriot,

Sestini (1792–1822), whose best known work, the 'Pia de'Tolomei' (b upon the reference to her in the 'Divina Commedia') is filled with exqu descriptions of Tuscan scenery. Not less perfect is the sonnet seque which he composed in memory of his betrothed, whose untoward deat lightening put an end to happiness for him and led to those Sicilian and o rovings throughout which he enthralled his friends by his improvisat genius. So far as I know there had been since Dante no poet who so fectly visualized in verse the loveliness of Tuscan landscape with all its away views over intervening valleys to the Apennines. Here are its cities, cresting the haze-girt knolls familiar to us in the backgrounds of tain of the best-loved quattro-cento masters of Florence, such as Gentil Fabbriano or Benozzo Gozzoli; its rolling, vineyarded spaces; its *macchi* lush bracken and golden *ginestra*, over which in June afternoons play '*nuvoli turchini*'; its grassy brooksides and interminable byways festo on either side with purpling blackberry vines; its meadows dozing in the s mer sun; its mountain glens, cool and redolent of sweet flowers; its mean ing lanes along which one finds sheep tinkling their bells in the first d drenched hours of morning when the cloud-fleeces blot out everything a long distant; its century-stained campanili that crown the hilltops all abo

Leopardi, chief Italian poet of his century, in a few immortal p depicts discrete objects in nature rather than nature herself. This l less valetudinarian injected into his poetry—the apotheosis of despa none of the pensive decadence, redolent of absinthe, which pervades Fr pessimistic verse. Although he lived during the early days of romanti his genius soared high above all such paltry things as movements or sch It is important to note the well-nigh sculpturesque perfection of his po He phrased in matchless verse alike the grandeur of Vesuvius and the h ble farmyard with its belongings. His love of nature was as genuine as of the most naturalistic Greek elegists, whom, at times, he resemble felicity.

Had the Veronese Aleardi possessed the needful severity of taste to out the undergrowth of his poems, critics might less justly cry out upon r of his verse as inspired magniloquence. Aleardi's form is nowadays n monotonous than seductive; and the once unbridled admiration for his po which have fallen into complete abeyance is not easy to understand. though he never wrote a poem of sustained excellence one finds score beautiful verses embedded in a mire of merely euphonious verbiage. lines are too dulcifluous, languid, exotic, too lullingly melodious. despite all this verbose exuberance there are many admirable passage appreciation of the Tuscan and Roman marches.

Another victim of premature idolatry, the Tyrolese bard Prati is at present hardly read at all. Notwithstanding the too tremulous, almost petulant note of regret in his stanzas we frequently run across poems of his that are firmer in texture than those of his supposed model, Lamartine.

In such a cursory glimpse as this over the field of so-called nature poets of Italy one must needs omit not a few names which bear upon the topic. In a list of these landscapists Carducci would not figure to any such extent as non-Italian readers might, at first thought, imagine. When we refresh our memories of the late Tuscan's great body of verse we are confronted with a large mass of poetry dealing pre-eminently with purely human affairs and moods, not with the expression of the poet's love of hedgerows or flowers or birds or waves or storms or sunsets, in short with all that complexus of phenomena which we call nature. A sonnet upon Goldoni, an ode to Victor Hugo, a poem on the death of the patriot Cairoli, these, together with poems of historic or literary content that appeal to the intellect rather than to the senses, constitute the main bulk of this master's poetry. There are, however, a sufficient number of examples, as 'Nostalgia,' 'Through the Val d'Arno,' 'Crossing the Tuscan Maremma,' the famous 'At the Fount of Clitumnus,' to show that this poet, the most virile of his century, possessed a strong love of nature in many of her moods.

One has only to skim the pages of those anthologies that contain representative Italian poems of the last forty years or so to understand how great a proportion deals with nature worship pure and simple. The intensest expressions of this feeling have for the most part been voiced by the contemporary poets, in large measure Tuscan. There is not space here even to list, much less to quote from, the chief of these, not even from Panzacchi, Nencioni, or Graf. From 1869, the year in which appeared the first volume of verse by Betteloni until the present day, there has been a steadily increasing bulk of nature poetry which finds its highest reach in the work of the two Tuscans, Giovanni Pascoli and Giovanni Marradi. The former, Carducci's junior by a score of years, passed through all the grades of scholarly life which could bring him to be the justly appointed successor to the elder's honored chair at Bologna. By training a classicist of the classicists, he specialized in Horace; and is, as his poems attest, an adept in the technique of prosody. Author of some half dozen volumes of poems he has never written any more adequate than those of his first book, entitled 'Myricæ.' Like Leopardi he deals with humble topics,— the lone sparrow, the gleaner, budding time, the wild whin, the snowstorm, the night wind, cropping herds, the copse rose, the peach tree, and the like, which he describes with a fidelity and a simplicity of expression that easily place him among the foremost of what,

lacking a better name, are called *landscape* poets of any country. Pascol has written, especially during late years, not a few poems more pretentious both in theme and in treatment; but even though perhaps emulous of becoming the Tennyson of Italy, he excels in the description of the objects of nature rather than in the lyric analysis of nature's moods as related to his own.

With Marradi, on the contrary, the case is quite reversed. While Pascoli most often impresses one, as would a naturalist — a Thoreau or a Richard Jefferies — turned pastmaster of poetic forms and usages, Marradi rather subjectively steeps the reader's fancy in the mood of the moment. Pascoli, the poetical ecologist, observes and chronicles the facts and image-begetting phenomena of our environment. Marradi observes these and not content with this alone, attuning himself to the dominant note of these phenomena, and putting the reader under his spell, makes him relive the mood just as the poet himself first experienced it. He does not give us pallid reflections of passionate experiences, but rather mirrors in one's heart his own mood in such wise that the reader evokes for himself one nearly identical with it.

Not for a moment would the writer seek to compare in point of excellence a sonnet of Marradi with, let us say, one of Alfred de Musset's 'Nuits.' Still not only the images called up by the former, but his simple eloquence of expression, place Marradi on a high level. Through his eyes we see the picture of two lovers in the wan moonlight wandering down the slopes of Fiesole into Florence, buried in snowy billows of mist save for

> 'Come un'aerea gigantesca pina,
> Cinta di stelle e di sottil vapore
> Solitaria emergea nell'argentina
> Serenita Santa Maria del Fiore;'

that of the railway trip from Arezzo to Florence along the banks of Arno with its solemn fishers half merged in haze; that of Medicean Florence as one paces up and down her bridges by night, that of the Tyrrhenian seashore:

> . . . 'limpida sorride
> Sul mar la calma, e con tremolin d'oro
> L'onda azzureggia; mentre la Gorgona
> Spicca nel mezzo nereggiante, e sembra
> Un gran cetaceo che galleggi immoto
> Per godersi egli pur questo superbo
> Spettacolo.'

Unnumbered prospects of sunsets seen from the castle-tipped towns of Tuscany; of hot, indolent mornings on the beach beside the brown nets; of dead calms spent upon the slow-heaving sea; of those still days which we term

Indian summer, when the unearthly hush is broken only by the droning over fields of crimson-headed clover of great purple bees; of days in the city of dreams, Siena, looking afar off from the fortress past the gray olive orchards, over broad meadows into the bell-towered distances,— all this and more conjures up before one and in a form indescribably musical. Here are none of the languid mouthings of that arch pleonast Aleardi, none of Prati's *lachrymæ rerum*, none of the overwrought motifs of that specialist in architectonic lyrism, Guido Mazzoni, Carducci's favorite disciple. One does not expect to find nor does he discover in the poems of either Pascoli or of Marradi the surpassing mastery of Shelley or of Keats. But he is perfectly safe in making the somewhat novel plea that both of these Italians, as well as certain of their immediate predecessors, and not a few of their contemporaries, have shown quite as intense and sincere an appreciation of nature as have any of the English, French, or German poets of the period under discussion.

The fact, once accepted, is the more significant in that Italy, with all her trebly glorious traditions, remains to-day the least nationalized country of modern Western Europe. Hence she has more than any other nation been thrown back upon her puristic antecedents. Still another far-reaching social trait characteristic of Italians would seem to make for a breed of writers of *vers de société* rather than for a group of sticklers for the ideals in poetry of which Leopardi and Carducci are such lofty exemplars. I refer to the time-honored aptitude for an urban existence with all that this implies,— an innate fondness for café lounging and its entailed gossipy *conversazioni;* the typical Italian horror of solitude; the fondness for saunterings along paved rather than along cespitous ways; the all but universal practice of which we Anglo-Saxons shed to a great extent with the paling of the age of Anne and the reign of coffee houses as the general places of polite resort; the fixed habit of repairing to the play on the part of all those who for professional reasons are not prevented from gathering around this pivotal rallying-ground, the notion, in fine, that the country, in itself the negligible periphery of their urban environment, is a region best apprehended through the pages of a book. That, despite this too general attitude, Italy has produced a school of such eloquent limners of nature as that at which we have hastily glanced is as creditable to them as it is unexpected.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS FOR JULY, 1908.

ARTISTS' IDEALS OF BEAUTY

Seven beautiful full-page duotone illustrations.

These portraits, selected by well-known figure painters as their ideals of beauty, suggest the conclusion that artists, as much as other men, differ in their preferences. Still, taking their selections as a whole, we think most people will agree that it would be difficult indeed to find seven types of feminine beauty to excel the loveliness of those whose portraits are reproduced in this number.

REMINISCENCES AND REFLECTIONS

By SIR JOHN HARE

In this — the third — instalment of his reminiscences, Sir John Hare, the famous English actor, takes us through one of the most interesting periods of his career, and tells how he started in management on his own account. The illustrations this month are of more than usual interest.

PICTURES IN MUSIC

Do you see pictures in music? When you hear a Beethoven symphony or a sonata by Schumann, do mystic figures and landscapes float before your eyes? It is by no means new or uncommon for a composer to have a distinct picture in his mind when he sets himself to create a work. Few, however, have been able to delineate their hallucinations born of music. Mendelssohn, who was no mean draughtsman, was often asked to do so, but always refused. "It is the function of music to hear, not to see," he once said. Nevertheless, it is highly interesting to see music translated in the terms of a sister art, and this is what a clever artist, Miss Pamela Colman Smith, has now done, in pictures which are here published for the first time.

SOME MUCH DISCUSSED PUZZLES — By HENRY E. DUDENEY

Much interest has been aroused by the puzzle articles we have lately published. Here is another which should provide many an hour's amusement for both young and old.

This number is exceptionally strong in

Dramatic Short Stories

which include:

IN LETTERS OF FIRE.....From the French of Gaston Leroux
THE DEAD EYES OF LOVE.....By Tom Gallon
LAWLESS OF PRESIDIO.....By C. C. Andrews
THE RODD STREET REVOLUTION.....By Arthur Morrison
HER LITTLE WAY.....By Anne Warner

WHY I AM NOT A CRIMINAL — Pictured by W. Heath Robinson

This series of half a dozen drawings, by the well-known humorous artist, W. Heath Robinson, is one of the most amusing features we have ever published. The manner in which he shows that crime is no longer what it was, and how great a degree of ingenuity is now required in the departments of burglary, smuggling, kidnapping, and larceny, must be seen — and laughed over — to be believed.

MEN-SERPENTS

An article describing the remarkable feats of some famous contortionists, illustrated with striking photographs of their extraordinary poses.

W. W. JACOBS

provides a feast of humor in another long instalment of his serial story "SALTHAVEN," which is illustrated by that well-known character artist, WILL OWEN.

"MY AFRICAN JOURNEY" — By Winston Spencer Churchill

Mr. Churchill, who has lately been appointed President of the Board of Trade and is now a member of the British Cabinet, this month describes in his breezy style his journey through East Africa to the Great Lake, as the Victoria Nyanza is called. As usual he illustrates his narrative with a very varied selection of photographs.

THE MYSTERIOUS ORIGIN OF FIRES

Outbreaks of fire are often most mysterious in their origin. We are frequently confronted with problems concerning the cause of fires in houses, factories, and fields that are utterly baffling and insoluble. Yet in what simple ways we may be victimized the examples given in this article afford most striking proof.

THE HOUSE OF ARDEN

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The August Bohemian

The August number is full of bright stories and illustrated features. For instance, there are "**Fads and Fancies before the Camera,**" beautifully illustrated from photographs; "**The Tipping Dementia,**" with many cartoons; "**Grover Cleveland's Life at Princeton,**" with photographs; "**Women in Journalism,**" with many photographs; and **Twelve** short stories.

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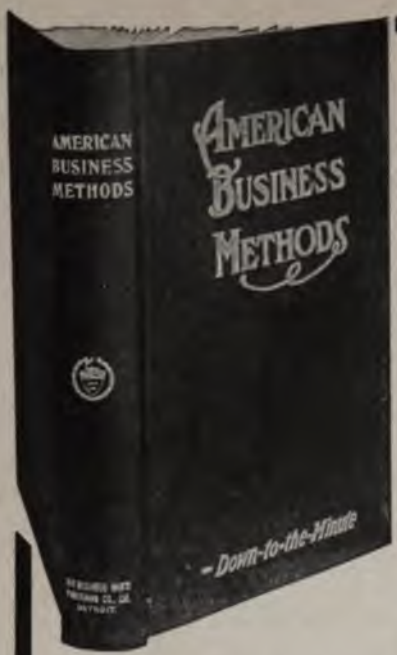

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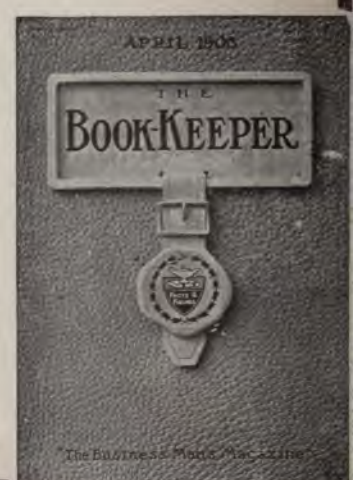

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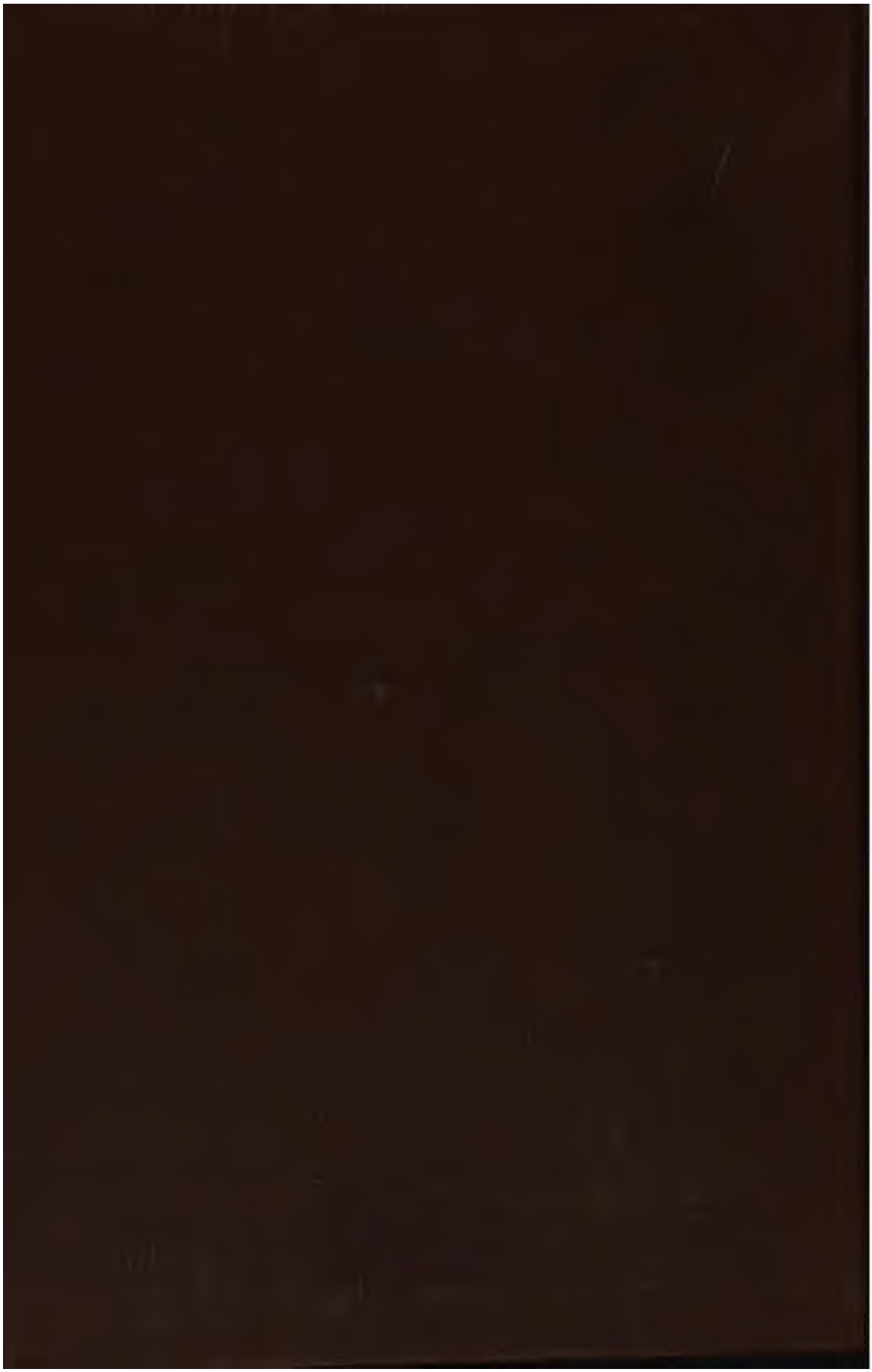
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